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THE

WORKS

OF

JOHN LOCKE.

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A

LETTER

CONCERNING

TOLERATION.

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TO THE READER.

The ensuing Letter concerning Toleration, first printed in Latin this very year, in Holland, has already been translated both into Dutch and French. So general and speedy an approbation may therefore bespeak its favourable reception in England. I think indeed there is no nation under heaven, in which so much has already been said upon that subject as ours. But yet certainly there is no people that stand in more need of having something further both said and done amongst them, in this point, than we do.

Our government has not only been partial in matters of religion, but those also who have suffered under that partiality, and have therefore endeavoured by their writings to vindicate their own rights and liberties, have for the most part done it upon narrow principles, suited only to the interests of their own sects.

This narrowness of spirit on all sides has undoubtedly been the principal occasion of our miseries and confusions. But whatever have been the occasions, it is now high time to seek for a thorough cure. We have need of more generous remedies than what have yet been made use of in our distemper. It is neither declarations of indulgence, nor acts of comprehension, such as have yet been practised or projected amongst

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us, that can do the work. The first will but palliate, the second increase our evil.

Absolute liberty, just and true liberty, equal and impartial liberty, is the thing that we stand in need of. Now, though this has indeed been much talked of, I doubt it has not been much understood; I am sure not at all practised, either by our governors towards the people in general, or by any dissenting parties of the people towards one another.

I cannot, therefore, but hope that this discourse, which treats of that subject, however briefly, yet more exactly than any we have yet seen, demonstrating both the equitableness and practicableness of the thing, will be esteemed highly seasonable by all men who have souls large enough to prefer the true interest of the public, before that of a party.

It is for the use of such as are already so spirited, or to inspire that spirit into those that are not, that I have translated it into our language. But the thing itself is so short, that it will not bear a longer preface. I leave it, therefore, to the consideration of my countrymen; and heartily wish they may make the use of it that it appears to be designed for.

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A

LETTER

CONCERNING

TOLERATION.

HONOURED SIR,

SINCE you are pleased to inquire what are my thoughts about the mutual toleration of Christians in their different professions of religion, I must needs answer you freely, that I esteem that toleration to be the chief characteristical mark of the true church. For whatsoever some people boast of the antiquity of places and names, or of the pomp of their outward worship; others, of the reformation of their discipline; all, of the orthodoxy of their faith, for every one is orthodox to himself: these things, and all others of this nature, are much rather marks of men's striving for power and empire over one another, than of the church of Christ. Let any one have ever so true a claim to all these things, yet if he be destitute of charity, meekness, and goodwill in general towards all mankind, even to those that are not Christians, he is certainly yet short of being a true Christian himself. "The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, said our Saviour to his disciples, but ye shall not be so, Luke xxii. 25, 26. The business of true religion is quite another thing.

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It is not instituted in order to the erecting an external pomp, nor to the obtaining of ecclesiastical dominion, nor to the exercising of compulsive force; but to the regulating of men's lives according to the rules of virtue and piety. Whosoever will list himself under the banner of Christ, must, in the first place, and above all things, make war upon his own lusts and vices. It is in vain for any man to usurp the name of Christian, without holiness of life, purity of manners, and benignity and meekness of spirit. "Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity," 2 Tim. ii. 19. "Thou, when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren," said our Lord to Peter, Luke xxii. 32. It would indeed be very hard for one that appears careless about his own salvation, to persuade me that he were extremely concerned for mine. For it is impossible that those should sincerely and heartily apply themselves to make other people Christians, who have not really embraced the Christian religion in their own hearts. If the Gospel and the apostles may be credited, no man can be a Christian without charity, and without that faith which works, not by force, but by love. Now I appeal to the consciences of those that persecute, torment, destroy, and kill other men upon pretence of religion, whether they do it out of friendship and kindness towards them, or no: and I shall then indeed, and not till then, believe they do so, when I shall see those fiery zealots correcting, in the same manner, their friends and familiar acquaintance, for the manifest sins they commit against the precepts of the Gospel; when I shall see them prosecute with fire and sword the members of their own communion that are tainted with enormous vices, and without amendment are in danger of eternal perdition; and when I shall see them thus express their love and desire of the salvation of their souls by the infliction of torments, and exercise of all manner of cruelties. For if it be out of a principle of charity, as they pretend, and love to men's souls, that they deprive them of their estates, maim them with corporal punishments, starve and torment them in noisome

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prisons, and in the end even take away their lives; I say, if all this be done merely to make men Christians, and procure their salvation, why then do they suffer "whoredom, fraud, malice, and such like enormities," which, according to the apostle, Rom. i. manifestly relish of heathenish corruption, to predominate so much and abound amongst their flocks and people? These, and such like things, are certainly more contrary to the glory of God, to the purity of the church, and to the salvation of souls, than any conscientious dissent from ecclesiastical decision, or separation from public worship, whilst accompanied with innocency of life. Why then does this burning zeal for God, for the church, and for the salvation of souls; burning, I say, literally with fire and faggot; pass by those moral vices and wickednesses, without any chastisement, which are acknowledged by all men to be diametrically opposite to the profession of Christianity, and bend all its nerves either to the introducing of ceremonies, or to the establishment of opinions, which for the most part are about nice and intricate matters, that exceed the capacity of ordinary understandings? Which of the parties contending about these things is in the right, which of them is guilty of schism, or heresy, whether those that domineer or those that suffer, will then at last be manifest, when the cause of their separation comes to be judged of. He certainly that follows Christ, embraces his doctrine, and bears his yoke, though he forsake both father and mother, separate from the public assemblies and ceremonies of his country, or whomsoever, or whatsoever else he relinquishes, will not then be judged an heretic.

Now, though the divisions that are amongst sects should be allowed to be ever so obstructive of the salvation of souls, yet, nevertheless, "adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, and such like things, cannot be denied to be works of the flesh;" concerning which the apostle has expressly declared, that "they who do them shall not inherit the kingdom of God," Gal. v. 21. Whosoever, there-

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fore, is sincerely solicitous about the kingdom of God, and thinks it his duty to endeavour the enlargement of it amongst men, ought to apply himself with no less care and industry to the rooting out of these immoralities, than to the extirpation of sects. But if any one do otherwise, and, whilst he is cruel and implacable towards those that differ from him in opinion, he be indulgent to such iniquities and immoralities as are unbecoming the name of a Christian, let such a one talk ever so much of the church, he plainly demonstrates by his actions, that it is another kingdom he aims at, and not the advancement of the kingdom of God.

That any man should think fit to cause another man, whose salvation he heartily desires, to expire in torments, and that even in an unconverted estate, would, I confess, seem very strange to me, and, I think, to any other also. But nobody, surely, will ever believe that such a carriage can proceed from charity, love, or goodwill. If any one maintain that men ought to be compelled by fire and sword to profess certain doctrines, and conform to this or that exterior worship, without any regard had unto their morals; if any one endeavour to convert those that are erroneous unto the faith, by forcing them to profess things that they do not believe, and allowing them to practise things that the Gospel does not permit; it cannot be doubted, indeed, that such a one is desirous to have a numerous assembly joined in the same profession with himself; but that he principally intends by those means to compose a truly Christian church, is altogether incredible. It is not therefore to be wondered at, if those who do not really contend for the advancement of the true religion, and of the church of Christ, make use of arms that do not belong to the Christian warfare. If, like the Captain of our salvation, they sincerely desired the good of souls, they would tread in the steps and follow the perfect example of that Prince of Peace, who sent out his soldiers to the subduing of nations, and gathering them into his church, not armed with the sword, or other

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instruments of force, but prepared with the Gospel of peace, and with the exemplary holiness of their conversation. This was his method. Though if infidels were to be converted by force, if those that are either blind or obstinate were to be drawn off from their errors by armed soldiers, we know very well that it was much more easy for him to do it with armies of heavenly legions, than for any son of the church, how potent soever, with all his dragoons.

The toleration of those that differ from others in matters of religion, is so agreeable to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and to the genuine reason of mankind, that it seems monstrous for men to be so blind, as not to perceive the necessity and advantage of it, in so clear a light. I will not here tax the pride and ambition of some, the passion and uncharitable zeal of others. These are faults from which human affairs can perhaps scarce ever be perfectly freed; but yet such as nobody will bear the plain imputation of, without covering them with some specious colour; and so pretend to commendation, whilst they are carried away by their own irregular passions. But, however, that some may not colour their spirit of persecution and unchristian cruelty with a pretence of care of the public weal, and observation of the laws, and that others, under pretence of religion, may not seek impunity for their libertinism and licentiousness; in a word, that none may impose either upon himself or others, by the pretences of loyalty and obedience to the prince, or of tenderness and sincerity in the worship of God; I esteem it above all things necessary to distinguish exactly the business of civil government from that of religion, and to settle the just bounds that lie between the one and the other. If this be not done, there can be no end put to the controversies that will be always arising between those that have, or at least pretend to have, on the one side, a concernment for the interest of men's souls, and, on the other side, a care of the commonwealth.

The commonwealth seems to me to be a society of men constituted only for the procuring, preserving, and advancing their own civil interests.

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Civil interest I call life, liberty, health, and indolency of body; and the possession of outward things, such as money, lands, houses, furniture, and the like.

It is the duty of the civil magistrate, by the impartial execution of equal laws, to secure unto all the people in general, and to every one of his subjects in particular, the just possession of these things belonging to this life. If any one presume to violate the laws of public justice and equity, established for the preservation of these things, his presumption is to be checked by the fear of punishment, consisting in the deprivation or diminution of those civil interests, or goods, which otherwise he might and ought to enjoy. But seeing no man does willingly suffer himself to be punished by the deprivation of any part of his goods, and much less of his liberty or life, therefore is the magistrate armed with the force and strength of all his subjects, in order to the punishment of those that violate any other man's rights.

Now that the whole jurisdiction of the magistrate reaches only to these civil concernments; and that all civil power, right, and dominion, is bounded and confined to the only care of promoting these things; and that it neither can nor ought in any manner to be extended to the salvation of souls; these following considerations seem unto me abundantly to demonstrate.

First, Because the care of souls is not committed to the civil magistrate, any more than to other men. It is not committed unto him, I say, by God; because it appears not that God has ever given any such authority to one man over another, as to compel any one to his religion. Nor can any such power be vested in the magistrate by the consent of the people; because no man can so far abandon the care of his own salvation as blindly to leave it to the choice of any other, whether prince or subject, to prescribe to him what faith or worship he shall embrace. For no man can, if he would, conform his faith to the dictates of another. All the life and power of true religion consists in the inward and full persuasion of the mind; and faith is not faith with-

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out believing. Whatever profession we make, to whatever outward worship we conform, if we are not fully satisfied in our own mind that the one is true, and the other well-pleasing unto God, such profession and such practice, far from being any furtherance, are indeed great obstacles to our salvation. For in this manner, instead of expiating other sins by the exercise of religion, I say, in offering thus unto God Almighty such a worship as we esteem to be displeasing unto him, we add unto the number of our other sins, those also of hypocrisy, and contempt of his Divine Majesty.

In the second place. The care of souls cannot belong to the civil magistrate, because his power consists only in outward force: but true and saving religion consists in the inward persuasion of the mind, without which nothing can be acceptable to God. And such is the nature of the understanding, that it cannot be compelled to the belief of any thing by outward force. Confiscation of estate, imprisonment, torments, nothing of that nature can have any such efficacy as to make men change the inward judgment that they have framed of things.

It may indeed be alleged that the magistrate may make use of arguments, and thereby draw the heterodox into the way of truth, and procure their salvation. I grant it; but this is common to him with other men. In teaching, instructing, and redressing the erroneous by reason, he may certainly do what becomes any good man to do. Magistracy does not oblige him to put off either humanity or Christianity. But it is one thing to persuade, another to command; one thing to press with arguments, another with penalties. This the civil power alone has a right to do; to the other, good-will is authority enough. Every man has commission to admonish, exhort, convince another of error, and by reasoning to draw him into truth: but to give laws, receive obedience, and compel with the sword, belongs to none but the magistrate. And upon this ground I affirm, that the magistrate's power extends not to the establishing of any articles of faith, or forms of worship, by the

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force of his laws. For laws are of no force at all without penalties, and penalties in this case are absolutely impertinent; because they are not proper to convince the mind. Neither the profession of any articles of faith, nor the conformity to any outward form of worship, as has been already said, can be available to the salvation of souls, unless the truth of the one, and the acceptableness of the other unto God, be thoroughly believed by those that so profess and practise. But penalties are no ways capable to produce such belief. It is only light and evidence that can work a change in men's opinions; and that light can in no manner proceed from corporal sufferings, or any other outward penalties.

In the third place, The care of the salvation of men's souls cannot belong to the magistrate; because, though the rigour of laws and the force of penalties were capable to convince and change men's minds, yet would not that help at all to the salvation of their souls. For, there being but one truth, one way to heaven; what hopes is there that more men would be led into it, if they had no other rule to follow but the religion of the court, and were put under a necessity to quit the light of their own reason, to oppose the dictates of their own consciences, and blindly to resign up themselves to the will of their governors, and to the religion, which either ignorance, ambition, or superstition had chanced to establish in the countries where they were born? In the variety and contradiction of opinions in religion, wherein the princes of the world are as much divided as in their secular interests, the narrow way would be much straitened; one country alone would be in the right, and all the rest of the world put under an obligation of following their princes in the ways that lead to destruction: and that which heightens the absurdity, and very ill suits the notion of a Deity, men would owe their eternal happiness or misery to the places of their nativity.

These considerations, to omit many others that might have been urged to the same purpose, seem unto me sufficient to conclude, that all the power of civil go-

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vernment relates only to men's civil interests, is confined to the care of the things of this world, and hath nothing to do with the world to come.

Let us now consider what a church is. A church then I take to be a voluntary society of men, joining themselves together of their own accord, in order to the public worshipping of God, in such a manner as they judge acceptable to him, and effectual to the salvation of their souls.

I say, it is a free and voluntary society. Nobody is born a member of any church; otherwise the religion of parents would descend unto children, by the same right of inheritance as their temporal estates, and every one would hold his faith by the same tenure he does his lands; than which nothing can be imagined more absurd. Thus therefore that matter stands. No man by nature is bound unto any particular church or sect, but every one joins himself voluntarily to that society in which he believes he has found that profession and worship which is truly acceptable to God. The hopes of salvation, as it was the only cause of his entrance into that communion, so it can be the only reason of his stay there. For if afterwards he discover any thing either erroneous in the doctrine, or incongruous in the worship of that society to which he has joined himself, why should it not be as free for him to go out as it was to enter? No member of a religious society can be tied with any other bonds but what proceed from the certain expectation of eternal life. A church then is a society of members voluntarily uniting to this end.

It follows now that we consider what is the power of this church, and unto what laws it is subject.

Forasmuch as no society, how free soever, or upon whatsoever slight occasion instituted, (whether of philosophers for learning, of merchants for commerce, or of men of leisure for mutual conversation and discourse) no church or company, I say, can in the least subsist and hold together, but will presently dissolve and break to pieces, unless it be regulated by some laws, and the members all consent to observe some order. Place

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and time of meeting must be agreed on; rules for admitting and excluding members must be established; distinction of officers, and putting things into a regular course, and such like, cannot be omitted. But since the joining together of several members into this church-society, as has already been demonstrated, is absolutely free and spontaneous, it necessarily follows, that the right of making its laws can belong to none but the society itself, or at least, which is the same thing, to those whom the society by common consent has authorized thereunto.

Some perhaps may object, that no such society can be said to be a true church, unless it have in it a bishop, or presbyter, with ruling authority derived from the very apostles, and continued down unto the present time by an uninterrupted succession.

To these I answer. In the first place, Let them show me the edict by which Christ has imposed that law upon his church. And let not any man think me impertinent, if, in a thing of this consequence, I require that the terms of that edict be very express and positive.—For the promise he has made us, that "wheresoever two or three are gathered together in his name, he will be in the midst of them," Matth. xviii. 20, seems to imply the contrary. Whether such an assembly want any thing necessary to a true church, pray do you consider. Certain I am, that nothing can be there wanting unto the salvation of souls, which is sufficient for our purpose.

Next, pray observe how great have always been the divisions amongst even those who lay so much stress upon the divine institution, and continued succession of a certain order of rulers in the church. Now their very dissension unavoidably puts us upon a necessity of deliberating, and consequently allows a liberty of choosing that, which upon consideration we prefer.

And, in the last place, I consent that these men have a ruler of their church, established by such a long series of succession as they judge necessary, provided I may have liberty at the same time to join myself to that

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society, in which I am persuaded those things are to be found which are necessary to the salvation of my soul. In this manner ecclesiastical liberty will be preserved on all sides, and no man will have a legislator imposed upon him, but whom himself has chosen.

But since men are so solicitous about the true church, I would only ask them here by the way, if it be not more agreeable to the church of Christ to make the conditions of her communion consist in such things, and such things only, as the Holy Spirit has in the holy Scriptures declared, in express words, to be necessary to salvation? I ask, I say, whether this be not more agreeable to the church of Christ, than for men to impose their own inventions and interpretations upon others, as if they were of divine authority; and to establish by ecclesiastical laws, as absolutely necessary to the profession of Christianity, such things as the holy Scriptures do either not mention, or at least not expressly command? Whosoever requires those things in order to ecclesiastical communion, which Christ does not require in order to life eternal, he may perhaps indeed constitute a society accommodated to his own opinion, and his own advantage; but how that can be called the church of Christ, which is established upon laws that are not his, and which excludes such persons from its communion as he will one day receive into the kingdom of heaven, I understand not. But this being not a proper place to inquire into the marks of the true church, I will only mind those that contend so earnestly for the decrees of their own society, and that cry out continually the CHURCH, the CHURCH, with as much noise, and perhaps upon the same principle, as the Ephesian silversmiths did for their Diana; this, I say, I desire to mind them of, that the Gospel frequently declares, that the true disciples of Christ must suffer persecution; but that the church of Christ should persecute others, and force others by fire and sword to embrace her faith and doctrine, I could never yet find in any of the books of the New Testament.

The end of a religious society, as has already been

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said, is the public worship of God, and by means thereof the acquisition of eternal life. All discipline ought therefore to tend to that end, and all ecclesiastical laws to be thereunto confined. Nothing ought, nor can be transacted in this society, relating to the possession of civil and worldly goods. No force is here to be made use of, upon any occasion whatsoever: for force belongs wholly to the civil magistrate, and the possession of all outward goods is subject to his jurisdiction.

But it may be asked, by what means then shall ecclesiastical laws be established, if they must be thus destitute of all compulsive power? I answer they must be established by means suitable to the nature of such things, whereof the external profession and observation, if not proceeding from a thorough conviction and approbation of the mind, is altogether useless and unprofitable. The arms by which the members of this society are to be kept within their duty, are exhortations, admonitions, and advice. If by these means the offenders will not be reclaimed, and the erroneous convinced, there remains nothing farther to be done, but that such stubborn and obstinate persons, who give no ground to hope for their reformation, should be cast out and separated from the society. This is the last and utmost force of ecclesiastical authority: no other punishment can thereby be inflicted, than that the relation ceasing between the body and the member which is cut off, the person so condemned ceases to be a part of that church.

These things being thus determined, let us inquire, in the next place, how far the duty of toleration extends, and what is required from every one by it.

And first, I hold, that no church is bound by the duty of toleration to retain any such person in her bosom, as after admonition continues obstinately to offend against the laws of the society. For these being the condition of communion, and the bond of society, if the breach of them were permitted without any animadversion, the society would immediately be thereby dissolved. But nevertheless, in all such cases care is to be

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taken that the sentence of excommunication, and the execution thereof, carry with it no rough usage, of word or action, whereby the ejected person may any ways be damnified in body or estate. For all force, as has often been said, belongs only to the magistrate, nor ought any private persons, at any time, to use force; unless it be in self-defence against unjust violence. Excommunication neither does nor can deprive the excommunicated person of any of those civil goods that he formerly possessed. All those things belong to the civil government, and are under the magistrate's protection. The whole force of excommunication consists only in this, that the resolution of the society in that respect being declared, the union that was between the body and some member, comes thereby to be dissolved; and that relation ceasing, the participation of some certain things, which the society communicated to its members, and unto which no man has any civil right, comes also to cease. For there is no civil injury done unto the excommunicated person, by the church minister's refusing him that bread and wine, in the celebration of the Lord's supper, which was not bought with his, but other men's money.

Secondly: No private person has any right in any manner to prejudice another person in his civil enjoyments, because he is of another church or religion. All the rights and franchises that belong to him as a man, or as a denison, are inviolably to be preserved to him. These are not the business of religion. No violence nor injury is to be offered him, whether he be Christian or pagan. Nay, we must not content ourselves with the narrow measures of bare justice: charity, bounty, and liberality must be added to it. This the Gospel enjoins, this reason directs, and this that natural fellowship we are born into requires of us. If any man err from the right way, it is his own misfortune, no injury to thee: nor therefore art thou to punish him in the things of this life, because thou supposest he will be miserable in that which is to come.

What I say concerning the mutual toleration of private persons differing from one another in religion,

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I understand also of particular churches; which stand as it were in the same relation to each other as private persons among themselves; nor has any one of them any manner of jurisdiction over any other, no, not even when the civil magistrate, as it sometimes happens, comes to be of this or the other communion. For the civil government can give no new right to the church, nor the church to the civil government. So that whether the magistrate join himself to any church, or separate from it, the church remains always as it was before, a free and voluntary society. It neither acquires the power of the sword by the magistrate's coming to it, nor does it lose the right of instruction and excommunication by his going from it. This is the fundamental and immutable right of a spontaneous society, that it has to remove any of its members who transgress the rules of its institution: but it cannot, by the accession of any new members, acquire any right of jurisdiction over those that are not joined with it. And therefore peace, equity, and friendship, are always mutually to be observed by particular churches, in the same manner as by private persons, without any pretence of superiority or jurisdiction over one another.

That the thing may be made yet clearer by an example; let us suppose two churches, the one of Arminians, the other of Calvinists, residing in the city of Constantinople. Will any one say, that either of these churches has right to deprive the members of the other of their estates and liberty, as we see practised elsewhere, because of their differing from it in some doctrines or ceremonies; whilst the Turks in the meanwhile silently stand by, and laugh to see with what inhuman cruelty Christians thus rage against Christians? But if one of these churches hath this power of treating the other ill, I ask which of them it is to whom that power belongs, and by what right? It will be answered, undoubtedly, that it is the orthodox church which has the right of authority over the erroneous or heretical. This is, in great and specious words, to say just nothing at all. For every church is orthodox to itself; to others, erroneous or heretical. Whatso-

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ever any church believes, it believes to be true; and the contrary thereunto it pronounces to be error. So that the controversy between these churches about the truth of their doctrines, and the purity of their worship, is on both sides equal; nor is there any judge, either at Constantinople, or elsewhere upon earth, by whose sentence it can be determined. The decision of that question belongs only to the Supreme Judge of all men, to whom also alone belongs the punishment of the erroneous. In the mean while, let those men consider how heinously they sin, who, adding injustice, if not to their error, yet certainly to their pride, do rashly and arrogantly take upon them to misuse the servants of another master, who are not at all accountable to them.

Nay, further: if it could be manifest which of these two dissenting churches were in the right way, there would not accrue thereby unto the orthodox any right of destroying the other. For churches have neither any jurisdiction in worldly matters, nor are fire and sword any proper instruments wherewith to convince men's minds of error, and inform them of the truth. Let us suppose, nevertheless, that the civil magistrate is inclined to favour one of them, and to put his sword into their hands, that, by his consent, they might chastise the dissenters as they pleased. Will any man say, that any right can be derived unto a Christian church, over its brethren, from a Turkish emperor? An infidel, who has himself no authority to punish Christians for the articles of their faith, cannot confer such an authority upon any society of Christians, nor give unto them a right which he has not himself. This would be the case at Constantinople. And the reason of the thing is the same in any Christian kingdom. The civil power is the same in every place: nor can that power, in the hands of a Christian prince, confer any greater authority upon the church, than in the hands of a heathen; which is to say, just none at all.

Nevertheless, it is worthy to be observed, and lamented, that the most violent of these defenders of the truth, the opposers of error, the exclaimers against

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schism, do hardly ever let loose this their zeal for God, with which they are so warmed and inflamed, unless where they have the civil magistrate on their side. But so soon as ever court favour has given them the better end of the staff, and they begin to feel themselves the stronger; then presently peace and charity are to be laid aside: otherwise they are religiously to be observed. Where they have not the power to carry on persecution, and to become masters, there they desire to live upon fair terms, and preach up toleration. When they are not strengthened with the civil power, then they can bear most patiently, and unmovedly, the contagion of idolatry, superstition, and heresy, in their neighbourhood; of which, on other occasions, the interest of religion makes them to be extremely apprehensive. They do not forwardly attack those errors which are in fashion at court, or are countenanced by the government. Here they can be content to spare their arguments: which yet, with their leave, is the only right method of propagating truth; which has no such way of prevailing, as when strong arguments and good reason are joined with the softness of civility and good usage.

Nobody therefore, in fine, neither single persons, nor churches, nay, nor even commonwealths, have any just title to invade the civil rights and worldly goods of each other, upon pretence of religion. Those that are of another opinion, would do well to consider with themselves how pernicious a seed of discord and war, how powerful a provocation to endless hatreds, rapines, and slaughters, they thereby furnish unto mankind. No peace and security, no, not so much as common friendship, can ever be established or preserved amongst men, so long as this opinion prevails, "that dominion is founded in grace, and that religion is to be propagated by force of arms."

In the third place: Let us see what the duty of toleration requires from those who are distinguished from the rest of mankind, from the laity, as they please to call us, by some ecclesiastical character and office; whether they be bishops, priests, presbyters, ministers,

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or however else dignified or distinguished. It is not my business to inquire here into the original of the power or dignity of the clergy. This only I say, that whencesoever their authority be sprung, since it is ecclesiastical, it ought to be confined within the bounds of the church, nor can it in any manner be extended to civil affairs; because the church itself is a thing absolutely separate and distinct from the commonwealth. The boundaries on both sides are fixed and immoveable. He jumbles heaven and earth together, the things most remote and opposite, who mixes these societies, which are, in their original, end, business, and in every thing, perfectly distinct, and infinitely different from each other. No man therefore, with whatsoever ecclesiastical office he be dignified, can deprive another man, that is not of his church and faith, either of liberty, or of any part of his worldly goods, upon the account of that difference which is between them in religion. For whatsoever is not lawful to the whole church cannot, by any ecclesiastical right, become lawful to any of its members.

But this is not all. It is not enough that ecclesiastical men abstain from violence and rapine, and all manner of persecution. He that pretends to be a successor of the apostles, and takes upon him the office of teaching, is obliged also to admonish his hearers of the duties of peace and good-will towards all men; as well towards the erroneous as the orthodox; towards those that differ from them in faith and worship, as well as towards those that agree with them therein: and he ought industriously to exhort all men, whether private persons or magistrates, if any such there be in his church, to charity, meekness, and toleration; and diligently endeavour to allay and temper all that heat, and unreasonable averseness of mind, which either any man's fiery zeal for his own sect, or the craft of others, has kindled against dissenters. I will not undertake to represent how happy and how great would be the fruit, both in church and state, if the pulpits every where sounded with this doctrine of peace and toleration; lest I should seem to reflect too severely upon those men

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whose dignity I desire not to detract from, nor would have it diminished either by others or themselves. But this I say, that thus it ought to be. And if any one that professes himself to be a minister of the word of God, a preacher of the Gospel of peace, teach otherwise; he either understands not, or neglects the business of his calling, and shall one day give account thereof unto the Prince of Peace. If Christians are to be admonished that they abstain from all manner of revenge, even after repeated provocations and multiplied injuries; how much more ought they who suffer nothing, who have had no harm done them, to forbear violence, and abstain from all manner of ill usage towards those from whom they have received none! This caution and temper they ought certainly to use towards those who mind only their own business, and are solicitous for nothing but that, whatever men think of them, they may worship God in that manner which they are persuaded is acceptable to him, and in which they have the strongest hopes of eternal salvation. In private domestic affairs, in the management of estates, in the conservation of bodily health, every man may consider what suits his own conveniency, and follow what course he likes best. No man complains of the ill management of his neighbour's affairs. No man is angry with another for an error committed in sowing his land, or in marrying his daughter. Nobody corrects a spendthrift for consuming his substance in taverns. Let any man pull down, or build, or make whatsoever expenses he pleases, nobody murmurs, nobody controls him; he has his liberty. But if any man do not frequent the church, if he do not there conform his behaviour exactly to the accustomed ceremonies, or if he brings not his children to be initiated in the sacred mysteries of this or the other congregation; this immediately causes an uproar, and the neighbourhood is filled with noise and clamour. Every one is ready to be the avenger of so great a crime. And the zealots hardly have patience to refrain from violence and rapine, so long till the cause be heard, and the poor man be, according to form, condemned to the loss of liberty, goods, or life. Oh

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that our ecclesiastical orators, of every sect, would apply themselves, with all the strength of argument that they are able, to the confounding of men's errors! But let them spare their persons. Let them not supply their want of reasons with the instruments of force, which belong to another jurisdiction, and do ill become a churchman's hands. Let them not call in the magistrate's authority to the aid of their eloquence or learning; lest perhaps, whilst they pretend only love for the truth, this their intemperate zeal, breathing nothing but fire and sword, betray their ambition, and show that what they desire is temporal dominion. For it will be very difficult to persuade men of sense, that he, who with dry eyes, and satisfaction of mind, can deliver his brother unto the executioner, to be burnt alive, does sincerely and heartily concern himself to save that brother from the flames of hell in the world to come.

In the last place. Let us now consider what is the magistrate's duty in the business of toleration: which is certainly very considerable.

We have already proved, that the care of souls does not belong to the magistrate: not a magisterial care, I mean, if I may so call it, which consists in prescribing by laws, and compelling by punishments. But a charitable care, which consists in teaching, admonishing, and persuading, cannot be denied unto any man. The care therefore of every man's soul belongs unto himself, and is to be left unto himself. But what if he neglect the care of his soul? I answer, what if he neglect the care of his health, or of his estate; which things are nearlier related to the government of the magistrate than the other? Will the magistrate provide by an express law, that such an one shall not become poor or sick? Laws provide, as much as is possible, that the goods and health of subjects be not injured by the fraud or violence of others; they do not guard them from the negligence or ill husbandry of the possessors themselves. No man can be forced to be rich or healthful, whether he will or no. Nay, God himself will not save men against their wills. Let us suppose, however, that some prince were desirous to force his subjects to accumulate

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riches, or to preserve the health and strength of their bodies. Shall it be provided by law, that they must consult none but Roman physicians, and shall every one be bound to live according to their prescriptions? What, shall no potion, no broth be taken, but what is prepared either in the Vatican, suppose, or in a Geneva shop? Or to make these subjects rich, shall they all be obliged by law to become merchants, or musicians? Or, shall every one turn victualler, or smith, because there are some that maintain their families plentifully, and grow rich in those professions? But it may be said, there are a thousand ways to wealth, but one only way to heaven. It is well said indeed, especially by those that plead for compelling men into this or the other way; for if there were several ways that lead thither, there would not be so much as a pretence left for compulsion. But now, if I be marching on with my utmost vigour, in that way which, according to the sacred geography, leads straight to Jerusalem; why am I beaten and ill used by others, because, perhaps, I wear not buskins; because my hair is not of the right cut; because, perhaps, I have not been dipt in the right fashion; because I eat flesh upon the road, or some other food which agrees with my stomach; because I avoid certain by-ways, which seem unto me to lead into briars or precipices; because, amongst the several paths that are in the same road, I choose that to walk in which seems to be the straightest and cleanest; because I avoid to keep company with some travellers that are less grave, and others that are more sour than they ought to be; or in fine, because I follow a guide that either is, or is not, clothed in white, and crowned with a mitre? Certainly, if we consider right, we shall find that for the most part they are such frivolous things as these, that, without any prejudice to religion or the salvation of souls, if not accompanied with superstition or hypocrisy, might either be observed or omitted; I say, they are such like things as these, which breed implacable enmities among Christian brethren, who are all agreed in the substantial and truly fundamental part of religion.

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But let us grant unto these zealots, who condemn all things that are not of their mode, that from these circumstances arise different ends. What shall we conclude from thence? There is only one of these which is the true way to eternal happiness. But, in this great variety of ways that men follow, it is still doubted which is this right one. Now, neither the care of the commonwealth, nor the right of enacting laws, does discover this way that leads to heaven more certainly to the magistrate, than every private man's search and study discovers it unto himself. I have a weak body, sunk under a languishing disease, for which I suppose there is only one remedy, but that unknown: does it therefore belong unto the magistrate to prescribe me a remedy, because there is but one, and because it is unknown? Because there is but one way for me to escape death, will it therefore be safe for me to do whatsoever the magistrate ordains? Those things that every man ought sincerely to inquire into himself, and by meditation, study, search, and his own endeavours, attain the knowledge of, cannot be looked upon as the peculiar profession of any one sort of men. Princes, indeed, are born superior unto other men in power, but in nature equal. Neither the right, nor the art of ruling, does necessarily carry along with it the certain knowledge of other things; and least of all of the true religion; for if it were so, how could it come to pass that the lords of the earth should differ so vastly as they do in religious matters? But let us grant that it is probable the way to eternal life may be better known by a prince than by his subjects; or, at least, that in this incertitude of things, the safest and most commodious way for private persons is to follow his dictates. You will say, what then? If he should bid you follow merchandize for your livelihood, would you decline that course, for fear it should not succeed? I answer, I would turn merchant upon the prince's command, because in case I should have ill success in trade, he is abundantly able to make up my loss some other way. If it be true, as he pretends, that he desires I should thrive and grow rich, he can set me up again when unsuccessful voyages

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have broke me. But this is not the case in the things that regard the life to come. If there I take a wrong course, if in that respect I am once undone, it is not in the magistrate's power to repair my loss, to ease my suffering, or to restore me in any measure, much less entirely, to a good estate. What security can be given for the kingdom of heaven?

Perhaps some will say, that they do not suppose this infallible judgment, that all men are bound to follow in the affairs of religion, to be in the civil magistrate, but in the church. What the church has determined, that the civil magistrate orders to be observed; and he provides by his authority, that nobody shall either act or believe, in the business of religion, otherwise than the church teaches; so that the judgment of those things is in the church. The magistrate himself yields obedience thereunto, and requires the like obedience from others. I answer, Who sees not how frequently the name of the church, which was so venerable in the time of the apostles, has been made use of to throw dust in people's eyes, in following ages? But, however, in the present case it helps us not. The one only narrow way which leads to heaven is not better known to the magistrate than to private persons, and therefore I cannot safely take him for my guide, who may probably be as ignorant of the way as myself, and who certainly is less concerned for my salvation than I myself am. Amongst so many kings of the Jews, how many of them were there whom any Israelite, thus blindly following, had not fallen into idolatry, and thereby into destruction? Yet, nevertheless, you bid me be of good courage, and tell me that all is now safe and secure, because the magistrate does not now enjoin the observance of his own decrees in matters of religion, but only the decrees of the church. Of what church, I beseech you? Of that which certainly likes him best. As if he that compels me by laws and penalties to enter into this or the other church, did not interpose his own judgment in the matter. What difference is there whether he lead me himself, or deliver me over to be led by others? I depend both ways upon his will, and it is he that determines

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both ways of my eternal state. Would an Israelite, that had worshipped Baal upon the command of his king, have been in any better condition, because somebody had told him that the king ordered nothing in religion upon his own head, nor commanded any thing to be done by his subjects in divine worship, but what was approved by the counsel of priests, and declared to be of divine right by the doctors of the church? If the religion of any church become, therefore, true and saving, because the head of that sect, the prelates and priests, and those of that tribe, do all of them, with all their might, extol and praise it; what religion can ever be accounted erroneous, false, and destructive? I am doubtful concerning the doctrine of the Socinians, I am suspicious of the way of worship practised by the Papists or Lutherans; will it be ever a jot the safer for me to join either unto the one or the other of those churches, upon the magistrate's command, because he commands nothing in religion but by the authority and counsel of the doctors of that church?

But to speak the truth, we must acknowledge that the church, if a convention of clergymen, making canons, must be called by that name, is for the most part more apt to be influenced by the court, than the court by the church. How the church was under the vicissitude of orthodox and Arian emperors is very well known. Or if those things be too remote, our modern English history affords us fresher examples, in the reigns of Henry VIII. Edward VI. Mary, and Elizabeth, how easily and smoothly the clergy changed their decrees, their articles of faith, their form of worship, every thing, according to the inclination of those kings and queens. Yet were those kings and queens of such different minds, in points of religion, and enjoined thereupon such different things, that no man in his wits, I had almost said none but an atheist, will presume to say that any sincere and upright worshipper of God could, with a safe conscience, obey their several decrees. To conclude, it is the same thing whether a king that prescribes laws to another man's religion pretend to do it by his own judgment, or by the ecclesiastical authority

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and advice of others. The decisions of churchmen, whose differences and disputes are sufficiently known, cannot be any sounder or safer than his: nor can all their suffrages joined together add any new strength unto the civil power. Though this also must be taken notice of, that princes seldom have any regard to the suffrages of ecclesiastics that are not favourers of their own faith and way of worship.

But after all, the principal consideration, and which absolutely determines this controversy, is this: although the magistrate's opinion in religion be sound, and the way that he appoints be truly evangelical, yet if I be not thoroughly persuaded thereof in my own mind, there will be no safety for me in following it. No way whatsoever that I shall walk in against the dictates of my conscience, will ever bring me to the mansions of the blessed. I may grow rich by an art that I take not delight in; I may be cured of some disease by remedies that I have not faith in; but I cannot be saved by a religion that I distrust, and by a worship that I abhor. It is in vain for an unbeliever to take up the outward show of another man's profession. Faith only, and inward sincerity, are the things that procure acceptance with God. The most likely and most approved remedy can have no effect upon the patient, if his stomach reject it as soon as taken; and you will in vain cram a medicine down a sick man's throat, which his particular constitution will be sure to turn into poison. In a word, whatsoever may be doubtful in religion, yet this at least is certain, that no religion, which I believe not to be true, can be either true or profitable unto me. In vain, therefore, do princes compel their subjects to come into their church-communion, under pretence of saving their souls. If they believe, they will come of their own accord; if they believe not, their coming will nothing avail them. How great, soever, in fine, may be the pretence of good-will and charity, and concern for the salvation of men's souls, men cannot be forced to be saved whether they will or no; and therefore, when all is done, they must be left to their own consciences.

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Having thus at length freed men from all dominion over one another in matters of religion, let us now consider what they are to do. All men know and acknowledge that God ought to be publicly worshipped. Why otherwise do they compel one another unto the public assemblies? Men, therefore, constituted in this liberty are to enter into some religious society, that they may meet together, not only for mutual edification, but to own to the world that they worship God, and offer unto his divine majesty such service as they themselves are not ashamed of, and such as they think not unworthy of him, nor unacceptable to him; and finally, that by the purity of doctrine, holiness of life, and decent form of worship, they may draw others unto the love of the true religion, and perform such other things in religion as cannot be done by each private man apart.

These religious societies I call churches: and these I say the magistrate ought to tolerate: for the business of these assemblies of the people is nothing but what is lawful for every man in particular to take care of; I mean the salvation of their souls: nor, in this case. is there any difference between the national church and other separated congregations.

But as in every church there are two things especially to be considered; the outward form and rites of worship, and the doctrines and articles of faith; these things must be handled each distinctly, that so the whole matter of toleration may the more clearly be understood.

Concerning outward worship, I say, in the first place, that the magistrate has no power to enforce by law, either in his own church, or much less in another, the use of any rites or ceremonies whatsoever in the worship of God. And this, not only because these churches are free societies, but because whatsoever is practised in the worship of God is only so far justifiable as it is believed by those that practise it to be acceptable unto him.—Whatsoever is not done with that assurance of faith, is neither well in itself, nor can it be acceptable to God. To impose such things, therefore, upon any people,

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contrary to their own judgment, is, in effect, to command them to offend God; which, considering that the end of all religion is to please him, and that liberty is essentially necessary to that end, appears to be absurd beyond expression.

But perhaps it may be concluded from hence, that I deny unto the magistrate all manner of power about indifferent things; which, if it be not granted, the whole subject matter of law-making is taken away. No, I readily grant that indifferent things, and perhaps none but such, are subjected to the legislative power. But it does not therefore follow, that the magistrate may ordain whatsoever he pleases concerning any thing that is indifferent. The public good is the rule and measure of all law-making. If a thing be not useful to the commonwealth, though it be ever so indifferent, it may not presently be established by law.

But further: Things ever so indifferent in their own nature, when they are brought into the church and worship of God, are removed out of the reach of the magistrate's jurisdiction, because in that use they have no connexion at all with civil affairs. The only business of the church is the salvation of souls: and it no ways concerns the commonwealth, or any member of it, that this or the other ceremony be there made use of. Neither the use, nor the omission, of any ceremonies in those religious assemblies does either advantage or prejudice the life, liberty, or estate, of any man. For example: Let it be granted, that the washing of an infant with water is in itself an indifferent thing: let it be granted also, that if the magistrate understand such washing to be profitable to the curing or preventing of any disease that children are subject unto, and esteem the matter weighty enough to be taken care of by a law, in that case he may order it to be done. But will any one, therefore, say, that the magistrate has the same right to ordain, by law, that all children shall be baptized by priests, in the sacred font, in order to the purification of their souls? The extreme difference of these two cases is visible to every one at first sight. Or let us

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apply the last case to the child of a Jew, and the thing will speak itself: for what hinders but a Christian magistrate may have subjects that are Jews? Now, if we acknowledge that such an injury may not be done unto a Jew, as to compel him, against his own opinion, to practise in his religion a thing that is in its nature indifferent, how can we maintain that any thing of this kind may be done to a Christian?

Again: Things in their own nature indifferent, cannot, by any human authority, be made any part of the worship of God, for this very reason, because they are indifferent. For since indifferent things are not capable, by any virtue of their own, to propitiate the Deity, no human power or authority can confer on them so much dignity and excellency as to enable them to do it. In the common affairs of life, that use of indifferent things which God has not forbidden is free and lawful; and therefore in those things human authority has place. But it is not so in matters of religion. Things indifferent are not otherwise lawful in the worship of God than as they are instituted by God himself; and as he, by some positive command, has ordained them to be made a part of that worship which he will vouchsafe to accept of at the hands of poor sinful men. Nor when an incensed Deity shall ask us, "Who has required these or such like things at your hands?" will it be enough to answer him, that the magistrate commanded them. If civil jurisdiction extended thus far, what might not lawfully be introduced into religion? What hodge-podge of ceremonies, what superstitious inventions, built upon the magistrate's authority, might not, against conscience, be imposed upon the worshippers of God! For the greatest part of these ceremonies and superstitions consists in the religious use of such things as are in their own nature indifferent: nor are they sinful upon any other account, than because God is not the author of them. The sprinkling of water, and use of bread and wine, are both in their own nature, and in the ordinary occasions of life, altogether indifferent. Will any man, therefore, say that these things could have been introduced into religion, and made a

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part of divine worship, if not by divine institution? If any human authority or civil power could have done this, why might it not also enjoin the eating of fish, and drinking of ale, in the holy banquet, as a part of divine worship? Why not the sprinkling of the blood of beasts in churches, and expiations by water or fire, and abundance more of this kind? But these things, how indifferent soever they be in common uses, when they come to be annexed unto divine worship, without divine authority, they are as abominable to God as the sacrifice of a dog. And why a dog so abominable? What difference is there between a dog and a goat, in respect of the divine nature, equally and infinitely distant from all affinity with matter; unless it be that God required the use of the one in his worship, and not of the other? We see, therefore, that indifferent things, how much soever they be under the power of the civil magistrate, yet cannot, upon that pretence, be introduced into religion, and imposed upon religious assemblies; because in the worship of God they wholly cease to be indifferent. He that worships God, does it with design to please him, and procure his favour: but that cannot be done by him, who, upon the command of another, offers unto God that which he knows will be displeasing to him, because not commanded by himself. This is not to please God, or appease his wrath, but willingly and knowingly to provoke him, by a manifest contempt; which is a thing absolutely repugnant to the nature and end of worship.

But it will here be asked, If nothing belonging to divine worship be left to human discretion, how is it then that churches themselves have the power of ordering any thing about the time and place of worship, and the like? To this I answer; that in religious worship we must distinguish between what is part of the worship itself, and what is but a circumstance. That is a part of the worship which is believed to be appointed by God, and to be well pleasing to him; and therefore that is necessary. Circumstances are such things which, though in general they cannot be separated from worship, yet the particular instances or modifications of

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them are not determined; and therefore they are indifferent. Of this sort are the time and place of worship, the habit and posture of him that worships. These are circumstances, and perfectly indifferent, where God has not given any express command about them. For example: amongst the Jews, the time and place of their worship, and the habits of those that officiated in it, were not mere circumstances, but a part of the worship itself; in which, if any thing were defective, or different from the institution, they could not hope that it would be accepted by God. But these, to Christians, under the liberty of the Gospel, are mere circumstances of worship which the prudence of every church may bring into such use as shall be judged most subservient to the end of order, decency, and edification. Though even under the Gospel also, those who believe the first, or the seventh day to be set apart by God, and consecrated still to his worship, to them that portion of time is not a simple circumstance, but a real part of divine worship, which can neither be changed nor neglected.

In the next place: As the magistrate has no power to impose, by his laws, the use of any rites and ceremonies in any church; so neither has he any power to forbid the use of such rites and ceremonies as are already received, approved, and practised by any church: because, if he did so, he would destroy the church itself; the end of whose institution is only to worship God with freedom, after its own manner.

You will say, by this rule, if some congregations should have a mind to sacrifice infants, or, as the primitive Christians were falsely accused, lustfully pollute themselves in promiscuous uncleanness, or practise any other such heinous enormities, is the magistrate obliged to tolerate them, because they are committed in a religious assembly? I answer, No. These things are not lawful in the ordinary course of life, nor in any private house; and, therefore, neither are they so in the worship of God, or in any religious meeting. But, indeed, if any people congregated upon account of religion, should

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be desirous to sacrifice a calf, I deny that that ought to be prohibited by a law. Melibœus, whose calf it is, may lawfully kill his calf at home, and burn any part of it that he thinks fit: for no injury is thereby done to any one, no prejudice to another man's goods. And for the same reason he may kill his calf also in a religious meeting. Whether the doing so be well-pleasing to God or no, it is their part to consider that do it.—The part of the magistrate is only to take care that the commonwealth receive no prejudice, and that there be no injury done to any man, either in life or estate. And thus what may be spent on a feast may be spent on a sacrifice. But if, peradventure, such were the state of things, that the interest of the commonwealth required all slaughter of beasts should be forborn for some while, in order to the increasing of the stock of cattle, that had been destroyed by some extraordinary murrain; who sees not that the magistrate, in such a case, may forbid all his subjects to kill any calves for any use whatsoever? Only it is to be observed, that in this case the law is not made about a religious, but a political matter: nor is the sacrifice, but the slaughter of calves thereby prohibited.

By this we see what difference there is between the church and the commonwealth. Whatsoever is lawful in the commonwealth, cannot be prohibited by the magistrate in the church. Whatsoever is permitted unto any of his subjects for their ordinary use, neither can nor ought to be forbidden by him to any sect of people for their religious uses. If any man may lawfully take bread or wine, either sitting or kneeling, in his own house, the law ought not to abridge him of the same liberty in his religious worship; though in the church the use of bread and wine be very different, and be there applied to the mysteries of faith, and rites of divine worship. But those things that are prejudicial to the commonweal of a people in their ordinary use, and are therefore forbidden by laws, those things ought not to be permitted to churches in their sacred rites. Only the magistrate ought always to be very careful that he

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do not misuse his authority, to the oppression of any church, under pretence of public good.

It may be said, What if a church be idolatrous, is that also to be tolerated by the magistrate? In answer, I ask, what power can be given to the magistrate for the suppression of an idolatrous church, which may not, in time and place, be made use of to the ruin of an orthodox one? For it must be remembered, that the civil power is the same every where, and the religion of every prince is orthodox to himself. If, therefore, such a power be granted unto the civil magistrate in spirituals, as that at Geneva, for example; he may extirpate, by violence and blood, the religion which is there reputed idolatrous; by the same rule, another magistrate, in some neighbouring country, may oppress the reformed religion; and, in India, the Christian. The civil power can either change every thing in religion, according to the prince's pleasure, or it can change nothing. If it be once permitted to introduce any thing into religion, by the means of laws and penalties, there can be no bounds put to it; but it will, in the same manner, be lawful to alter every thing, according to that rule of truth which the magistrate has framed unto himself. No man whatsoever ought therefore to be deprived of his terrestrial enjoyments, upon account of his religion. Not even Americans, subjected unto a Christian prince, are to be punished either in body or goods, for not embracing our faith and worship. If they are persuaded that they please God in observing the rites of their own country, and that they shall obtain happiness by that means, they are to be left unto God and themselves. Let us trace this matter to the bottom. Thus it is: an inconsiderable and weak number of Christians, destitute of every thing, arrive in a pagan country; these foreigners beseech the inhabitants, by the bowels of humanity, that they would succour them with the necessaries of life; those necessaries are given them, habitations are granted, and they all join together, and grow up into one body of people. The Christian religion by this means takes root in that country, and

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spreads itself; but does not suddenly grow the strongest. While things are in this condition, peace, friendship, faith, and equal justice, are preserved amongst them. At length the magistrate becomes a Christian, and by that means their party becomes the most powerful. Then immediately all compacts are to be broken, all civil rights to be violated, that idolatry may be extirpated: and unless these innocent pagans, strict observers of the rules of equity and the law of nature, and no ways offending against the laws of the society, I say unless they will forsake their ancient religion, and embrace a new and strange one, they are to be turned out of the lands and possessions of their forefathers, and perhaps deprived of life itself. Then at last it appears what zeal for the church, joined with the desire of dominion, is capable to produce: and how easily the pretence of religion, and of the care of souls, serves for a cloke to covetousness, rapine, and ambition.

Now, whosoever maintains that idolatry is to be rooted out of any place by laws, punishments, fire, and sword, may apply this story to himself: for the reason of the thing is equal, both in America and Europe. And neither pagans there, nor any dissenting Christians here, can with any right be deprived of their worldly goods by the predominating faction of a court-church; nor are any civil rights to be either changed or violated upon account of religion in one place more than another.

But idolatry, say some, is a sin, and therefore not to be tolerated. If they said it were therefore to be avoided, the inference were good. But it does not follow, that because it is a sin, it ought therefore to be punished by the magistrate. For it does not belong unto the magistrate to make use of his sword in punishing every thing, indifferently, that he takes to be a sin against God. Covetousness, uncharitableness, idleness, and many other things are sins, by the consent of all men, which yet no man ever said were to be punished by the magistrate. The reason is, because they are not prejudicial to other men's rights, nor do they break the

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public peace of societies. Nay, even the sins of lying and perjury are nowhere punishable by laws; unless in certain cases, in which the real turpitude of the thing, and the offence against God, are not considered, but only the injury done unto men's neighbours, and to the commonwealth. And what if, in another country, to a Mahometan or a pagan prince, the Christian religion seem false and offensive to God; may not the Christians, for the same reason, and after the same manner, be extirpated there?

But it may be urged farther, that by the law of Moses idolaters were to be rooted out. True indeed, by the law of Moses; but that is not obligatory to us Christians. Nobody pretends that every thing, generally, enjoined by the law of Moses, ought to be practised by Christians. But there is nothing more frivolous than that common distinction of moral, judicial, and ceremonial law, which men ordinarily make use of: for no positive law whatsoever can oblige any people but those to whom it is given. "Hear, O Israel," sufficiently restrains the obligation of the law of Moses only to that people. And this consideration alone is answer enough unto those that urge the authority of the law of Moses, for the inflicting of capital punishments upon idolaters. But however I will examine this argument a little more particularly.

The case of idolaters, in respect of the Jewish commonwealth, falls under a double consideration. The first is of those, who, being initiated in the Mosaical rites, and made citizens of that commonwealth, did afterwards apostatize from the worship of the God of Israel. These were proceeded against as traitors and rebels, guilty of no less than high treason; for the commonwealth of the Jews, different in that from all others, was an absolute theocracy: nor was there, or could there be, any difference between that commonwealth and the church. The laws established there concerning the worship of one invisible Deity, were the civil laws of that people, and a part of their political government, in which God himself was the legislator. Now

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if any one can show me where there is a commonwealth, at this time, constituted upon that foundation, I will acknowledge that the ecclesiastical laws do there unavoidably become a part of the civil; and that the subjects of that government both may, and ought to be, kept in strict conformity with that church, by the civil power. But there is absolutely no such thing, under the Gospel, as a Christian commonwealth. There are, indeed, many cities and kingdoms that have embraced the faith of Christ; but they have retained their ancient forms of government, with which the law of Christ hath not at all meddled. He, indeed, hath taught men how, by faith and good works, they may attain eternal life. But he instituted no commonwealth; he prescribed unto his followers no new and peculiar form of government; nor put he the sword into any magistrate's hand, with commission to make use of it in forcing men to forsake their former religion, and receive his.

Secondly, Foreigners, and such as were strangers to the commonwealth of Israel, were not compelled by force to observe the rites of the Mosaical law: but, on the contrary, in the very same place where it is ordered that an Israelite that was an idolater should be put to death, there it is provided that strangers should not be "vexed nor oppressed," Exod. xxii. 21. I confess that the seven nations that possessed the land which was promised to the Israelites were utterly to be cut off. But this was not singly because they were idolaters; for if that had been the reason, why were the Moabites and other nations to be spared? No; the reason is this: God being in a peculiar manner the King of the Jews, he could not suffer the adoration of any other deity, which was properly an act of high treason against himself, in the land of Canaan, which was his kingdom; for such a manifest revolt could no ways consist with his dominion, which was perfectly political, in that country. All idolatry was therefore to be rooted out of the bounds of his kingdom; because it was an acknowledgment of another God, that is to say, another king, against the laws of empire. The inhabitants were also

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to be driven out, that the entire possession of the land might be given to the Israelites. And for the like reason the Emims and the Horims were driven out of their countries by the children of Esau and Lot; and their lands, upon the same grounds, given by God to the invaders, Deut. ii. 12. But though all idolatry was thus rooted out of the land of Canaan, yet every idolater was not brought to execution. The whole family of Rahab, the whole nation of the Gibeonites, articled with Joshua, and were allowed by treaty; and there were many captives amongst the Jews, who were idolaters. David and Solomon subdued many countries without the confines of the Land of Promise, and carried their conquests as far as Euphrates. Amongst so many captives taken, of so many nations reduced under their obedience, we find not one man forced into the Jewish religion, and the worship of the true God, and punished for idolatry, though all of them were certainly guilty of it. If any one indeed, becoming a proselyte, desired to be made a denizen of their commonwealth, he was obliged to submit unto their laws; that is, to embrace their religion. But this he did willingly, on his own accord, not by constraint. He did not unwillingly submit, to show his obedience; but he sought and solicited for it, as a privilege; and as soon as he was admitted, he became subject to the laws of the commonwealth, by which all idolatry was forbidden within the borders of the land of Canaan. But that law, as I have said, did not reach to any of those regions, however subjected unto the Jews, that were situated without those bounds.

Thus far concerning outward worship. Let us now consider articles of faith.

The articles of religion are some of them practical, and some speculative. Now, though both sorts consist in the knowledge of truth, yet these terminate simply in the understanding, those influence the will and manners. Speculative opinions, therefore, and articles of faith, as they are called, which are required only to be believed, cannot be imposed on any church by the law of the land; for it is absurd that things should be

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enjoined by laws which are not in men's power to perform; and to believe this or that to be true does not depend upon our will. But of this enough has been said already. But, will some say, let men at least profess that they believe. A sweet religion, indeed, that obliges men to dissemble, and tell lies both to God and man, for the salvation of their souls! If the magistrate thinks to save men thus, he seems to understand little of the way of salvation; and if he does it not in order to save them, why is he so solicitous about the articles of faith as to enact them by a law?

Further, The magistrate ought not to forbid the preaching or professing of any speculative opinions in any church, because they have no manner of relation to the civil rights of the subjects. If a Roman Catholic believe that to be really the body of Christ, which another man calls bread, he does no injury thereby to his neighbour. If a Jew does not believe the New Testament to be the word of God, he does not thereby alter any thing in men's civil rights. If a heathen doubt of both Testaments, he is not therefore to be punished as a pernicious citizen. The power of the magistrate, and the estates of the people, may be equally secure, whether any man believe these things or no. I readily grant that these opinions are false and absurd; but the business of laws is not to provide for the truth of opinions, but for the safety and security of the commonwealth, and of every particular man's goods and person. And so it ought to be; for truth certainly would do well enough, if she were once left to shift for herself. She seldom has received, and I fear never will receive, much assistance from the power of great men, to whom she is but rarely known, and more rarely welcome. She is not taught by laws, nor has she any need of force to procure her entrance into the minds of men. Errors indeed prevail by the assistance of foreign and borrowed succours. But if truth makes not her way into the understanding by her own light, she will be but the weaker for any borrowed force violence can add to her. Thus much for speculative opinions. Let us now proceed to the practical ones.

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A good life, in which consists not the least part of religion and true piety, concerns also the civil government: and in it lies the safety both of men's souls and of the commonwealth. Moral actions belong therefore to the jurisdiction both of the outward and inward court; both of the civil and domestic governor; I mean, both of the magistrate and conscience. Here therefore is great danger, lest one of these jurisdictions intrench upon the other, and discord arise between the keeper of the public peace and the overseers of souls. But if what has been already said concerning the limits of both these governments be rightly considered, it will easily remove all difficulty in this matter.

Every man has an immortal soul, capable of eternal happiness or misery; whose happiness depending upon his believing and doing those things in this life, which are necessary to the obtaining of God's favour, and are prescribed by God to that end: it follows from thence, first, that the observance of these things is the highest obligation that lies upon mankind, and that our utmost care, application, and diligence, ought to be exercised in the search and performance of them; because there is nothing in this world that is of any consideration in comparison with eternity. Secondly, that seeing one man does not violate the right of another, by his erroneous opinions, and undue manner of worship, nor is his perdition any prejudice to another man's affairs; therefore the care of each man's salvation belongs only to himself. But I would not have this understood, as if I meant hereby to condemn all charitable admonitions, and affectionate endeavours to reduce men from errors; which are indeed the greatest duty of a Christian. Any one may employ as many exhortations and arguments as he pleases, towards the promoting of another man's salvation. But all force and compulsion are to be forborn. Nothing is to be done imperiously.—Nobody is obliged in that manner to yield obedience unto the admonitions or injunctions of another, farther than he himself is persuaded. Every man, in that, has the supreme and absolute authority of judging for himself; and the reason is, because nobody else is con-

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cerned in it, nor can receive any prejudice from his conduct therein.

But besides their souls, which are immortal, men have also their temporal lives here upon earth; the state whereof being frail and fleeting, and the duration uncertain, they have need of several outward conveniencies to the support thereof, which are to be procured or preserved by pains and industry; for those things that are necessary to the comfortable support of our lives, are not the spontaneous products of nature, nor do offer themselves fit and prepared for our use. This part, therefore, draws on another care, and necessarily gives another employment. But the pravity of mankind being such, that they had rather injuriously prey upon the fruits of other men's labours than take pains to provide for themselves; the necessity of preserving men in the possession of what honest industry has already acquired, and also of preserving their liberty and strength, whereby they may acquire what they farther want, obliges men to enter into society with one another; that by mutual assistance and joint force, they may secure unto each other their properties, in the things that contribute to the comforts and happiness of this life; leaving in the mean while to every man the care of his own eternal happiness, the attainment whereof can neither be facilitated by another man's industry, nor can the loss of it turn to another man's prejudice, nor the hope of it be forced from him by any external violence. But forasmuch as men thus entering into societies, grounded upon their mutual compacts of assistance, for the defence of their temporal goods, may nevertheless be deprived of them, either by the rapine and fraud of their fellow-citizens, or by the hostile violence of foreigners: the remedy of this evil consists in arms, riches, and multitudes of citizens: the remedy of others in laws: and the care of all things relating both to the one and the other is committed by the society to the civil magistrate. This is the original, this is the use, and these are the bounds of the legislative, which is the supreme power in every commonwealth. I mean, that provision may be made for the security of each man's private

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possessions; for the peace, riches, and public commodities of the whole people, and, as much as possible, for the increase of their inward strength against foreign invasions.

These things being thus explained, it is easy to understand to what end the legislative power ought to be directed, and by what measures regulated, and that is the temporal good and outward prosperity of the society, which is the sole reason of men's entering into society, and the only thing they seek and aim at in it; and it is also evident what liberty remains to men in reference to their eternal salvation, and that is, that every one should do what he in his conscience is persuaded to be acceptable to the Almighty, on whose good pleasure and acceptance depends his eternal happiness; for obedience is due in the first place to God, and afterwards to the laws.

But some may ask, "What if the magistrate should enjoin any thing by his authority, that appears unlawful to the conscience of a private person?" I answer, that if government be faithfully administered, and the counsels of the magistrate be indeed directed to the public good, this will seldom happen. But if perhaps it do so fall out, I say, that such a private person is to abstain from the actions that he judges unlawful; and he is to undergo the punishment, which is not unlawful for him to bear; for the private judgment of any person concerning a law enacted in political matters, for the public good, does not take away the obligation of that law, nor deserve a dispensation. But if the law indeed be concerning things that lie not within the verge of the magistrate's authority; as, for example, that the people, or any party amongst them, should be compelled to embrace a strange religion, and join in the worship and ceremonies of another church; men are not in these cases obliged by that law, against their consciences; for the political society is instituted for no other end, but only to secure every man's possession of the things of this life. The care of each man's soul, and of the things of heaven, which neither does belong

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to the commonwealth, nor can be subjected to it, is left entirely to every man's self. Thus the safeguard of men's lives, and of the things that belong unto this life, is the business of the commonwealth; and the preserving of those things unto their owners is the duty of the magistrate; and therefore the magistrate cannot take away these worldly things from this man, or party, and give them to that; nor change property amongst fellow-subjects, no not even by a law, for a cause that has no relation to the end of civil government; I mean for their religion; which, whether it be true or false, does no prejudice to the worldly concerns of their fellow-subjects, which are the things that only belong unto the care of the commonwealth.

"But what if the magistrate believe such a law as this to be for the public good?" I answer: as the private judgment of any particular person, if erroneous, does not exempt him from the obligation of law, so the private judgment, as I may call it, of the magistrate, does not give him any new right of imposing laws upon his subjects, which neither was in the constitution of the government granted him, nor ever was in the power of the people to grant: and least of all, if he make it his business to enrich and advance his followers and fellow-sectaries with the spoils of others. But what if the magistrate believe that he has a right to make such laws, and that they are for the public good; and his subjects believe the contrary? Who shall be judge between them? I answer, God alone; for there is no judge upon earth between the supreme magistrate and the people. God, I say, is the only judge in this case, who will retribute unto every one at the last day according to his deserts; that is, according to his sincerity and uprightness in endeavouring to promote piety, and the public weal and peace of mankind. But what shall be done in the mean while? I answer: the principal and chief care of every one ought to be of his own soul first, and, in the next place, of the public peace: though yet there are few will think it is peace there, where they see all laid waste. There are two sorts of contests

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amongst men; the one managed by law, the other by force: and they are of that nature, that where the one ends, the other always begins. But it is not my business to inquire into the power of the magistrate in the different constitutions of nations. I only know what usually happens where controversies arise, without a judge to determine them. You will say then the magistrate being the stronger will have his will, and carry his point. Without doubt. But the question is not here concerning the doubtfulness of the event, but the rule of right.

But to come to particulars. I say, first, No opinions contrary to human society, or to those moral rules which are necessary to the preservation of civil society, are to be tolerated by the magistrate. But of those indeed examples in any church are rare. For no sect can easily arrive to such a degree of madness, as that it should think fit to teach, for doctrines of religion, such things as manifestly undermine the foundations of society, and are therefore condemned by the judgment of all mankind: because their own interest, peace, reputation, every thing would be thereby endangered.

Another more secret evil, but more dangerous to the commonwealth, is when men arrogate to themselves, and to those of their own sect, some peculiar prerogative, covered over with a specious show of deceitful words, but in effect opposite to the civil rights of the community. For example: we cannot find any sect that teaches expressly and openly, that men are not obliged to keep their promise; that princes may be dethroned by those that differ from them in religion; or that the dominion of all things belongs only to themselves. For these things, proposed thus nakedly and plainly, would soon draw on them the eye and hand of the magistrate, and awaken all the care of the commonwealth to a watchfulness against the spreading of so dangerous an evil. But nevertheless, we find those that say the same things in other words. What else do they mean, who teach that "faith is not to be kept with heretics?" Their meaning, forsooth, is, that the privilege of breaking faith belongs unto themselves: for

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they declare all that are not of their communion to be heretics, or at least may declare them so whensoever they think fit. What can be the meaning of their asserting that "kings excommunicated forfeit their crowns and kingdoms?" It is evident that they thereby arrogate unto themselves the power of deposing kings: because they challenge the power of excommunication as the peculiar right of their hierarchy. "That dominion is founded in grace," is also an assertion by which those that maintain it do plainly lay claim to the possession of all things. For they are not so wanting to themselves as not to believe, or at least as not to profess, themselves to be the truly pious and faithful. These therefore, and the like, who attribute unto the faithful, religious, and orthodox, that is, in plain terms, unto themselves, any peculiar privilege or power above other mortals, in civil concernments; or who, upon pretence of religion, do challenge any manner of authority over such as are not associated with them in their ecclesiastical communion; I say these have no right to be tolerated by the magistrate; as neither those that will not own and teach the duty of tolerating all men in matters of mere religion. For what do all these and the like doctrines signify, but that they may, and are ready upon any occasion to seize the government, and possess themselves of the estates and fortunes of their fellow-subjects; and that they only ask leave to be tolerated by the magistrates so long, until they find themselves strong enough to effect it.

Again: That church can have no right to be tolerated by the magistrate, which is constituted upon such a bottom, that all those who enter into it, do thereby, *ipso facto*, deliver themselves up to the protection and service of another prince. For by this means the magistrate would give way to the settling of a foreign jurisdiction in his own country, and suffer his own people to be listed, as it were, for soldiers against his own government. Nor does the frivolous and fallacious distinction between the court and the church afford any remedy to this inconvenience; especially when both the one and the other are equally subject to the absolute

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authority of the same person; who has not only power to persuade the members of his church to whatsoever he lists, either as purely religious, or as in order thereunto; but can also enjoin it them on pain of eternal fire. It is ridiculous for any one to profess himself to be a Mahometan only in religion, but in every thing else a faithful subject to a Christian magistrate, whilst at the same time he acknowledges himself bound to yield blind obedience to the mufti of Constantinople; who himself is entirely obedient to the Ottoman emperor, and frames the famed oracles of that religion according to his pleasure. But this Mahometan, living amongst Christians, would yet more apparently renounce their government, if he acknowledged the same person to be head of his church, who is the supreme magistrate in the state.

Lastly, Those are not at all to be tolerated who deny the being of God. Promises, covenants, and oaths, which are the bonds of human society, can have no hold upon an atheist. The taking away of God, though but even in thought, dissolves all. Besides also, those that by their atheism undermine and destroy all religion, can have no pretence of religion whereupon to challenge the privilege of a toleration. As for other practical opinions, though not absolutely free from all error, yet if they do not tend to establish domination over others, or civil impunity to the church in which they are taught, there can be no reason why they should not be tolerated.

It remains that I say something concerning those assemblies, which being vulgarly called, and perhaps having sometimes been conventicles, and nurseries of factions and seditions, are thought to afford the strongest matter of objection against this doctrine of toleration. But this has not happened by any thing peculiar unto the genius of such assemblies, but by the unhappy circumstances of an oppressed or ill-settled liberty. These accusations would soon cease, if the law of toleration were once so settled, that all churches were obliged to lay down toleration as the foundation of their own liberty; and teach that liberty of conscience is every

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man's natural right, equally belonging to dissenters as to themselves; and that nobody ought to be compelled in matters of religion either by law or force. The establishment of this one thing would take away all ground of complaints and tumults upon account of conscience. And these causes of discontents and animosities being once removed, there would remain nothing in these assemblies that were not more peaceable, and less apt to produce disturbance of state, than in any other meetings whatsoever. But let us examine particularly the heads of these accusations.

You will say, that "assemblies and meetings endanger the public peace, and threaten the commonwealth." I answer: if this be so, why are there daily such numerous meetings in markets, and courts of judicature? Why are crowds upon the Exchange, and a concourse of people in cities suffered? You will reply, these are civil assemblies; but those we object against are ecclesiastical. I answer: it is a likely thing indeed, that such assemblies as are altogether remote from civil affairs should be most apt to embroil them. O, but civil assemblies are composed of men that differ from one another in matters of religion: but these ecclesiastical meetings are of persons that are all of one opinion. As if an agreement in matters of religion were in effect a conspiracy against the commonwealth: or as if men would not be so much the more warmly unanimous in religion, the less liberty they had of assembling. But it will be urged still, that civil assemblies are open, and free for any one to enter into; whereas religious conventicles are more private, and thereby give opportunity to clandestine machinations. I answer, that this is not strictly true: for many civil assemblies are not open to every one. And if some religious meetings be private, who are they, I beseech you, that are to be blamed for it? those that desire, or those that forbid their being public? Again: you will say, that religious communion does exceedingly unite men's minds and affections to one another, and is therefore the more dangerous. But if this be so, why is not the magistrate afraid of his own church; and why does he not forbid

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their assemblies, as things dangerous to his government? You will say, because he himself is a part, and even the head of them. As if he were not also a part of the commonwealth, and the head of the whole people.

Let us therefore deal plainly. The magistrate is afraid of other churches, but not of his own; because he is kind and favourable to the one, but severe and cruel to the other. These he treats like children, and indulges them even to wantonness. Those he uses as slaves; and how blamelessly soever they demean themselves, recompenses them no otherwise than by galleys, prisons, confiscations, and death. These he cherishes and defends: those he continually scourges and oppresses. Let him turn the tables: or let those dissenters enjoy but the same privileges in civils as his other subjects, and he will quickly find that these religious meetings will be no longer dangerous. For if men enter into seditious conspiracies, it is not religion inspires them to it in their meetings, but their sufferings and oppressions that make them willing to ease themselves. Just and moderate governments are every where quiet, every where safe. But oppression raises ferments, and makes men struggle to cast off an uneasy and tyrannical yoke. I know that seditions are very frequently raised upon pretence of religion. But it is as true, that, for religion, subjects are frequently ill treated, and live miserably. Believe me, the stirs that are made proceed not from any peculiar temper of this or that church or religious society; but from the common disposition of all mankind, who, when they groan under any heavy burthen, endeavour naturally to shake off the yoke that galls their necks. Suppose this business of religion were let alone, and that there were some other distinction made between men and men, upon account of their different complexions, shapes, and features, so that those who have black hair, for example, or gray eyes, should not enjoy the same privileges as other citizens; that they should not be permitted either to buy or sell, or live by their callings; that parents should not have the government and education of their own children; that

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they should either be excluded from the benefit of the laws, or meet with partial judges: can it be doubted but these persons, thus distinguished from others by the colour of their hair and eyes, and united together by one common persecution, would be as dangerous to the magistrate, as any others that had associated themselves merely upon the account of religion? Some enter into company for trade and profit: others, for want of business, have their clubs for claret. Neighbourhood joins some, and religion others. But there is one thing only which gathers people into seditious commotions, and that is oppression.

You will say; what, will you have people to meet at divine service against the magistrate's will? I answer; why, I pray, against his will? Is it not both lawful and necessary that they should meet? Against his will, do you say? That is what I complain of. That is the very root of all the mischief. Why are assemblies less sufferable in a church than in a theatre or market? Those that meet there are not either more vicious, or more turbulent, than those that meet elsewhere. The business in that is, that they are ill used, and therefore they are not to be suffered. Take away the partiality that is used towards them in matters of common right; change the laws, take away the penalties unto which they are subjected, and all things will immediately become safe and peaceable: nay, those that are averse to the religion of the magistrate, will think themselves so much the more bound to maintain the peace of the commonwealth, as their condition is better in that place than elsewhere; and all the several separate congregations, like so many guardians of the public peace, will watch one another, that nothing may be innovated or changed in the form of the government: because they can hope for nothing better than what they already enjoy; that is, an equal condition with their fellow-subjects, under a just and moderate government. Now if that church, which agrees in religion with the prince, be esteemed the chief support of any civil government, and that for no other reason, as has already been shown, than because the prince is kind, and the laws are fa-

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vourable to it; how much greater will be the security of a government, where all good subjects, of whatsoever they be, without any distinction upon account of religion, enjoying the same favour of the prince, and the same benefit of the laws, shall become the common support and guard of it; and where none will have any occasion to fear the severity of the laws, but those that do injuries to their neighbours, and offend against the civil peace!

That we may draw towards a conclusion. "The sum of all we drive at is, that every man enjoy the same rights that are granted to others." Is it permitted to worship God in the Roman manner? Let it be permitted to do it in the Geneva form also. Is it permitted to speak Latin in the market-place? Let those that have a mind to it, be permitted to do it also in the church. Is it lawful for any man in his own house to kneel, stand, sit, or use any other posture; and clothe himself in white or black, in short or in long garments? Let it not be made unlawful to eat bread, drink wine, or wash with water in the church. In a word: whatsoever things are left free by law in the common occasions of life, let them remain free unto every church in divine worship. Let no man's life, or body, or house, or estate, suffer any manner of prejudice upon these accounts. Can you allow of the presbyterian discipline? why should not the episcopal also have what they like? Ecclesiastical authority, whether it be administered by the hands of a single person, or many, is every where the same; and neither has any jurisdiction in things civil, nor any manner of power of compulsion, nor any thing at all to do with riches and revenues.

Ecclesiastical assemblies and sermons, are justified by daily experience, and public allowance. These are allowed to people of some one persuasion: why not to all? If any thing pass in a religious meeting seditiously, and contrary to the public peace, it is to be punished in the same manner, and no otherwise, than as if it had happened in a fair or market. These meetings ought not to be sanctuaries of factious and flagitious fellows: nor ought it to be less lawful for men to meet in churches

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than in halls: nor are one part of the subjects to be esteemed more blamable for their meeting together than others. Every one is to be accountable for his own actions; and no man is to be laid under a suspicion, or odium, for the fault of another. Those that are seditious, murderers, thieves, robbers, adulterers, slanderers, &c. of whatsoever church, whether national or not, ought to be punished and suppressed. But those whose doctrine is peaceable, and whose manners are pure and blameless, ought to be upon equal terms with their fellow-subjects. Thus if solemn assemblies, observations of festivals, public worship, be permitted to any one sort of professors; all these things ought to be permitted to the presbyterians, independents, anabaptists, Arminians, quakers, and others, with the same liberty. Nay, if we may openly speak the truth, and as becomes one man to another, neither pagan, nor Mahometan, nor Jew, ought to be excluded from the civil rights of the commonwealth, because of his religion. The Gospel commands no such thing. The church, "which judgeth not those that are without," 1 Cor. v. 11, wants it not. And the commonwealth, which embraces indifferently all men that are honest, peaceable, and industrious, requires it not. Shall we suffer a pagan to deal and trade with us, and shall we not suffer him to pray unto and worship God? If we allow the Jews to have private houses and dwellings amongst us, why should we not allow them to have synagogues? Is their doctrine more false, their worship more abominable, or is the civil peace more endangered, by their meeting in public, than in their private houses? But if these things may be granted to Jews and pagans, surely the condition of any Christians ought not to be worse than theirs, in a Christian commonwealth.

You will say, perhaps, yes, it ought to be: because they are more inclinable to factions, tumults, and civil wars. I answer: is this the fault of the Christian religion? If it be so, truly the Christian religion is the worst of all religions, and ought neither to be embraced by any particular person, nor tolerated by any commonwealth. For if this be the genius, this the nature of

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the Christian religion, to be turbulent and destructive of the civil peace, that church itself which the magistrate indulges will not always be innocent. But far be it from us to say any such thing of that religion, which carries the greatest opposition to covetousness, ambition, discord, contention, and all manner of inordinate desires; and is the most modest and peaceable religion that ever was. We must therefore seek another cause of those evils that are charged upon religion. And if we consider right, we shall find it consist wholly in the subject that I am treating of. It is not the diversity of opinions, which cannot be avoided; but the refusal of toleration to those that are of different opinions, which might have been granted, that has produced all the bustles and wars, that have been in the Christian world, upon account of religion. The heads and leaders of the church, moved by avarice and insatiable desire of dominion, making use of the immoderate ambition of magistrates, and the credulous superstition of the giddy multitude, have incensed and animated them against those that dissent from themselves, by preaching unto them, contrary to the laws of the Gospel, and to the precepts of charity, that schismatics and heretics are to be outed of their possessions, and destroyed. And thus have they mixed together, and confounded two things, that are in themselves most different, the church and the commonwealth. Now as it is very difficult for men patiently to suffer themselves to be stripped of the goods, which they have got by their honest industry; and contrary to all the laws of equity, both human and divine, to be delivered up for a prey to other men's violence and rapine; especially when they are otherwise altogether blameless; and that the occasion for which they are thus treated does not at all belong to the jurisdiction of the magistrate, but entirely to the conscience of every particular man, for the conduct of which he is accountable to God only; what else can be expected, but that these men, growing weary of the evils under which they labour, should in the end think it lawful for them to resist force with force, and to defend their natural rights, which are not forfeitable upon

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account of religion, with arms as well as they can? That this has been hitherto the ordinary course of things, is abundantly evident in history: and that it will continue to be so hereafter, is but too apparent in reason. It cannot indeed be otherwise, so long as the principle of persecution for religion shall prevail, as it has done hitherto, with magistrate and people; and so long as those that ought to be the preachers of peace and concord, shall continue, with all their art and strength, to excite men to arms, and sound the trumpet of war. But that magistrates should thus suffer these incendiaries, and disturbers of the public peace, might justly be wondered at, if it did not appear that they have been invited by them unto a participation of the spoil, and have therefore thought fit to make use of their covetousness and pride, as means whereby to increase their own power. For who does not see that these good men are indeed more ministers of the government than ministers of the Gospel; and that by flattering the ambition, and favouring the dominion of princes and men in authority, they endeavour with all their might to promote that tyranny in the commonwealth, which otherwise they should not be able to establish in the church? This is the unhappy agreement that we see between the church and the state. Whereas if each of them would contain itself within its own bounds, the one attending to the worldly welfare of the commonwealth, the other to the salvation of souls, it is impossible that any discord should ever have happened between them. "Sed pudet hæc opprobria," &c. God Almighty grant, I beseech him, that the Gospel of peace may at length be preached, and that civil magistrates, growing more careful to conform their own consciences to the law of God, and less solicitous about the binding of other men's consciences by human laws, may, like fathers of their country, direct all their counsels and endeavours to promote universally the civil welfare of all their children; except only of such as are arrogant, ungovernable, and injurious to their brethren; and that all ecclesiastical men, who boast themselves to be the successors of the apostles, walking peaceably and

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modestly in the apostles' steps, without intermeddling with state affairs, may apply themselves wholly to promote the salvation of souls. Farewell.

Perhaps it may not be amiss to add a few things concerning heresy and schism. A Turk is not, nor can be either heretic or schismatic to a Christian; and if any man fall off from the Christian faith to Mahometism, he does not thereby become a heretic, or a schismatic, but an apostate and an infidel. This nobody doubts of. And by this it appears that men of different religions cannot be heretics or schismatics to one another.

We are to inquire, therefore, what men are of the same religion: concerning which, it is manifest that those who have one and the same rule of faith and worship are of the same religion, and those who have not the same rule of faith and worship are of different religions. For since all things that belong unto that religion are contained in that rule, it follows necessarily, that those who agree in one rule are of one and the same religion; and *vice versâ*. Thus Turks and Christians are of different religions; because these take the Holy Scriptures to be the rule of their religion, and those the Koran. And for the same reason, there may be different religions also, even amongst Christians. The papists and the Lutherans, though both of them profess faith in Christ, and are therefore called Christians, yet are not both of the same religion: because these acknowledge nothing but the Holy Scriptures to be the rule and foundation of their religion; those take in also traditions and decrees of popes, and of all these together make the rule of their religion. And thus the Christians of St. John, as they are called, and the Christians of Geneva, are of different religions: because these also take only the Scriptures, and those, I know not what traditions, for the rule of their religion.

This being settled, it follows, First, That heresy is a separation made in ecclesiastical communion between men of the same religion, for some opinions no way contained in the rule itself. And secondly, That amongst those who acknowledge nothing but the Holy Scriptures to be their rule of faith, heresy is a separation made in

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their Christian communion, for opinions not contained in the express words of Scripture.

Now this separation may be made in a twofold manner:

First, When the greater part, or, by the magistrate's patronage, the stronger part, of the church separates itself from others, by excluding them out of her communion, because they will not profess their belief of certain opinions which are not to be found in the express words of Scripture. For it is not the paucity of those that are separated, nor the authority of the magistrate, that can make any man guilty of heresy; but he only is an heretic who divides the church into parts, introduces names and marks of distinction, and voluntarily makes a separation because of such opinions.

Secondly, When any one separates himself from the communion of a church, because that church does not publicly profess some certain opinions which the Holy Scriptures do not expressly teach.

Both these are "heretics, because they err in fundamentals, and they err obstinately against knowledge." For when they have determined the Holy Scriptures to be the only foundation of faith, they nevertheless lay down certain propositions as fundamental, which are not in the Scripture; and because others will not acknowledge these additional opinions of theirs, nor build upon them as if they were necessary and fundamental, they therefore make a separation in the church, either by withdrawing themselves from the others, or expelling the others from them. Nor does it signify any thing for them to say that their confessions and symbols are agreeable to Scripture, and to the analogy of faith: for if they be conceived in the express words of Scripture, there can be no question about them; because those are acknowledged by all Christians to be of divine inspiration, and therefore fundamental. But if they say that the articles which they require to be professed are consequences deduced from the Scripture, it is undoubtedly well done of them to believe and profess such things as seem unto them so agreeable to the rule of faith: but it would be very ill done to obtrude those

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things upon others, unto whom they do not seem to be the indubitable doctrines of the Scripture. And to make a separation for such things as these, which neither are nor can be fundamental, is to become heretics. For I do not think there is any man arrived to that degree of madness, as that he dare give out his consequences and interpretations of Scripture as divine inspirations, and compare the articles of faith, that he has framed according to his own fancy, with the authority of the Scripture. I know there are some propositions so evidently agreeable to Scripture, that nobody can deny them to be drawn from thence: but about those therefore there can be no difference. This only I say, that however clearly we may think this or the other doctrine to be deduced from Scripture, we ought not therefore to impose it upon others as a necessary article of faith, because we believe it to be agreeable to the rule of faith; unless we would be content also that other doctrines should be imposed upon us in the same manner; and that we should be compelled to receive and profess all the different and contradictory opinions of Lutherans, Calvinists, remonstrants, anabaptists, and other sects, which the contrivers of symbols, systems, and confessions, are accustomed to deliver unto their followers as genuine and necessary deductions from the Holy Scripture. I cannot but wonder at the extravagant arrogance of those men who think that they themselves can explain things necessary to salvation more clearly than the Holy Ghost, the eternal and infinite wisdom of God.

Thus much concerning heresy; which word in common use is applied only to the doctrinal part of religion. Let us now consider schism, which is a crime near akin to it: for both those words seem unto me to signify an "ill-grounded separation in ecclesiastical communion, made about things not necessary." But since use, which is the supreme law in matter of language, has determined that heresy relates to errors in faith, and schism to those in worship or discipline, we must consider them under that distinction.

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Schism then, for the same reasons that have already been alleged, is nothing else but a separation made in the communion of the church, upon account of something in divine worship, or ecclesiastical discipline, that is not any necessary part of it. Now nothing in worship or discipline can be necessary to Christian communion, but what Christ our legislator, or the apostles, by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, have commanded in express words.

In a word: he that denies not any thing that the Holy Scriptures teach in express words, nor makes a separation upon occasion of any thing that is not manifestly contained in the sacred text; however he may be nicknamed by any sect of Christians, and declared by some, or all of them, to be utterly void of true Christianity; yet in deed and in truth this man cannot be either a heretic or schismatic.

These things might have been explained more largely, and more advantageously; but it is enough to have hinted at them, thus briefly, to a person of your parts.

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A

SECOND LETTER

CONCERNING

TOLERATION.

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A

SECOND LETTER

CONCERNING

TOLERATION.

TO THE AUTHOR OF THE ARGUMENT OF THE LETTER CONCERNING TOLERATION BRIEFLY CONSIDERED AND ANSWERED.

SIR,

You will pardon me if I take the same liberty with you, that you have done with the author of the Letter concerning Toleration; to consider your arguments, and endeavour to show you the mistakes of them; for since you have so plainly yielded up the question to him, and do own that "the severities he would dissuade Christians from, are utterly unapt and improper to bring men to embrace that truth which must save them:" I am not without some hopes to prevail with you to do that yourself, which you say is the only justifiable aim of men differing about religion, even in the use of the severest methods, viz. carefully and impartially to weigh the whole matter, and thereby to remove that prejudice which makes you yet favour some remains

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of persecution: promising myself that so ingenious a person will either be convinced by the truth which appears so very clear and evident to me: or else confess, that, were either you or I in authority, we should very unreasonably and very unjustly use any force upon the other, which differed from him, upon any pretence of want of examination. And if force be not to be used in your case or mine, because unreasonable, or unjust; you will, I hope, think fit that it should be forborn in all others, where it will be equally unjust and unreasonable; as I doubt not but to make it appear it will unavoidably be, wherever you will go about to punish men for want of consideration; for the true way to try such speculations as these is, to see how they will prove when they are reduced into practice.

The first thing you seem startled at, in the author's letter, is the largeness of the toleration he proposes; and you think it strange that he would not have so much as a "Pagan, Mahometan, or Jew, excluded from the civil rights of the commonwealth, because of his religion," p. 1. We pray every day for their conversion, and I think it our duty so to do: but it will, I fear, hardly be believed that we pray in earnest, if we exclude them from the other ordinary and probable means of conversion, either by driving them from, or persecuting them when they are amongst us. Force, you allow, is improper to convert men to any religion. Toleration is but the removing that force; so that why those should not be tolerated as well as others, if you wish their conversion, I do not see. But you say, "It seems hard to conceive how the author of that letter should think to do any service to religion in general, or to the Christian religion, by recommending and persuading such a toleration; for how much soever it may tend to the advancement of trade and commerce (which some seem to place above all other considerations), I see no reason, from any experiment that has been made, to expect that true religion would be a gainer by it; that it would be either the better preserved, the more widely propagated, or rendered any

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whit the more fruitful in the lives of its professors by it." Before I come to your doubt itself, "Whether true religion would be a gainer by such a toleration;" give me leave to take notice, that if, by other considerations, you mean any thing but religion, your parenthesis is wholly beside the matter; and that if you do not know that the author of the letter places the advancement of trade above religion, your insinuation is very uncharitable. But I go on.

"You see no reason, you say, from any experiment that has been made, to expect that true religion would be a gainer by it." True religion and Christian religion are, I suppose, to you and me, the same thing. But of this you have an experiment in its first appearance in the world, and several hundreds of years after. It was then "better preserved, more widely propagated, in proportion, and rendered more fruitful in the lives of its professors," than ever since; though then Jews and pagans were tolerated, and more than tolerated, by the governments of those places where it grew up. I hope you do not imagine the Christian religion has lost any of its first beauty, force, or reasonableness, by having been almost two thousand years in the world; that you should fear it should be less able now to shift for itself, without the help of force. I doubt not but you look upon it still to be "the power and wisdom of God for our salvation;" and therefore cannot suspect it less capable to prevail now, by its own truth and light, than it did in the first ages of the church, when poor contemptible men, without authority, or the countenance of authority, had alone the care of it. This, as I take it, has been made use of by Christians generally, and by some of our church in particular, as an argument for the truth of the Christian religion; that it grew, and spread, and prevailed, without any aid from force, or the assistance of the powers in being; and if it be a mark of the true religion, that it will prevail by its own light and strength, but that false religions will not, but have need of force and foreign helps to support them, nothing certainly can be more for the ad-

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vantage of true religion, than to take away compulsion every where; and therefore it is no more "hard to conceive how the author of the letter should think to do service to religion in general, or to the Christian religion," than it is hard to conceive that he should think there is a true religion, and that the Christian religion is it; which its professors have always owned not to need force, and have urged that as a good argument to prove the truth of it. The inventions of men in religion need the force and helps of men to support them. A religion that is of God wants not the assistance of human authority to make it prevail. I guess, when this dropped from you, you had narrowed your thoughts to your own age and country: but if you will enlarge them a little beyond the confines of England, I do not doubt but you will easily imagine that if in Italy, Spain, Portugal, &c. the Inquisition; and in France their dragooning; and in other parts those severities that are used to keep or force men to the national religion, were taken away; and instead thereof the toleration proposed by the author were set up, the true religion would be a gainer by it.

The author of the letter says, "Truth would do well enough, if she were once left to shift for herself. She seldom hath received, and he fears never will receive, much assistance from the power of great men, to whom she is but rarely known, and more rarely welcome. Errors indeed prevail, by the assistance of foreign and borrowed succours. Truth makes way into our understanding, by her own light, and is but the weaker for any borrowed force that violence can add to her." These words of his, how hard soever they may seem to you, may help you to conceive how he should think to do service to true religion, by recommending and persuading such a toleration as he proposed. And now pray tell me yourself, whether you do not think true religion would be a gainer by it, if such a toleration, established there, would permit the doctrine of the church of England to be freely preached, and its worship set up, in any popish, Mahometan, or

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pagan country? If you do not, you have a very ill opinion of the religion of the church of England, and must own that it can only be propagated and supported by force. If you think it would gain in those countries, by such a toleration, you are then of the author's mind, and do not find it so hard to conceive how the recommending such a toleration might do service to that which you think true religion. But if you allow such a toleration useful to truth in other countries, you must find something very peculiar in the air, that must make it less useful to truth in England; and it will savour of much partiality, and be too absurd, I fear, for you to own, that toleration will be advantageous to true religion all the world over, except only in this island; though, I much suspect, this, as absurd as it is, lies at the bottom; and you build all you say, upon this lurking supposition, that the national religion now in England, backed by the public authority of the law, is the only true religion, and therefore no other is to be tolerated; which being a supposition equally unavoidable, and equally just in other countries, unless we can imagine that every where but in England men believe what at the same time they think to be a lie, will, in other places, exclude toleration, and thereby hinder truth from the means of propagating itself.

What the fruits of toleration are, which in the next words you complain do "remain still among us," and which, you say, "give no encouragement to hope for any advantages from it;" what fruits, I say, these are, or whether they are owing to the want or wideness of toleration among us, we shall then be able to judge, when you tell us what they are. In the mean time I will boldly say, that if the magistrates will severely and impartially set themselves against vice, in whomsoever it is found, and leave men to their own consciences, in their articles of faith, and ways of worship, "true religion will be spread wider, and be more fruitful in the lives of its professors," than ever hitherto it has been, by the imposition of creeds and ceremonies.

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You tell us, "that no man can fail of finding the way of salvation, who seeks it as he ought." I wonder you had not taken notice, in the places you quote for this, how we are directed there to the right way of seeking. The words, John vii. 17, are, "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God." And Psalm xxv. 9, 12, 14, which are also quoted by you, tell us, "The meek will he guide in judgment, and the meek will he teach his way. What man is he that feareth the Lord? him shall he teach in the way that he shall choose. The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will show them his covenant." So that these places, if they prove what you cite them for, "that no man can fail of finding the way of salvation, who seeks it as he ought;" they do also prove, that a good life is the only way to seek as we ought; and that therefore the magistrates, if they would put men upon seeking the way of salvation as they ought, should, by their laws and penalties, force them to a good life; a good conversation being the readiest and surest way to a right understanding. Punishments and severities thus applied, we are sure, are both practicable, just, and useful. How punishments will prove in the way you contend for, we shall see when we come to consider it.

Having given us these broad marks of your good will to toleration, you tell us, "It is not your design to argue against it, but only to inquire what our author offers for the proof of his assertion." And then you give us this scheme of his argument.

"1. There is but one way of salvation, or but one true religion.

"2. No man can be saved by this religion, who does not believe it to be the true religion.

"3. This belief is to be wrought in men by reason and argument, not by outward force and compulsion.

"4. Therefore all such force is utterly of no use for the promoting true religion, and the salvation of souls.

"5. And therefore nobody can have any right to use

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any force or compulsion, for the bringing men to the true religion."

And you tell us, "the whole strength of what that letter urged for the purpose of it, lies in this argument," which I think you have no more reason to say, than if you should tell us, that only one beam of a house had any strength in it, when there are several others that would support the building, were that gone.

The purpose of the letter is plainly to defend toleration, exempt from all force; especially civil force, or the force of the magistrate. Now, if it be a true consequence "that men must be tolerated, if magistrates have no commission or authority to punish them for matters of religion," then the only strength of that letter lies not in the unfitness of force to convince men's understanding. See Letter, p. 28.

Again; if it be true, that "magistrates being as liable to error as the rest of mankind, their using of force in matters of religion, would not at all advance the salvation of mankind," allowing that even force could work upon them, and magistrates had authority to use it in religion, then the argument you mention is not "the only one in that letter, of strength to prove the necessity of toleration." See Letter, p. 12. For the argument of the unfitness of force to convince men's minds being quite taken away, either of the other would be a strong proof for toleration. But let us consider the argument as you have put it.

"The two first propositions, you say, you agree to." As to the third, you grant "that force is very improper to be used to induce the mind to assent to any truth." But yet you deny, "that force is utterly useless for the promoting true religion, and the salvation of men's souls;" which you call the author's fourth proposition; but indeed that is not the author's fourth proposition, or any proposition of his, to be found in the pages you quote, or any where else in the whole letter, either in those terms, or in the sense you take it. In page 12, which you quote, the author is showing

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that the magistrate has no power, that is, no right, to make use of force in matters of religion, for the salvation of mens souls. And the reason he gives for it there is, because force has no efficacy to convince men's minds; and that without a full persuasion of the mind, the profession of the true religion itself is not acceptable to God. "Upon this ground, says he, I affirm that the magistrate's power extends not to the establishing any articles of faith, or forms of worship, by the force of his laws. For laws are of no force at all without penalties; and penalties in this case are absolutely impertinent, because they are not proper to convince the mind." And so again, p. 28, which is the other place you quote, the author says: "Whatsoever may be doubted in religion, yet this at least is certain, that no religion which I believe not to be true can be either true or profitable unto me. In vain, therefore, do princes compel their subjects to come into their church communion, under the pretence of saving their souls." And more to this purpose. But in neither of those passages, nor any where else, that I remember, does the author say that it is impossible that force should any way, at any time, upon any person, by any accident, be useful towards the promoting of true religion, and the salvation of souls; for that is it which you mean by "utterly of no use." He does not deny that there is any thing which God in his goodness does not, or may not, sometimes graciously make use of, towards the salvation of men's souls; as our Saviour did of clay and spittle to cure blindness; and that so force also may be sometimes useful. But that which he denies, and you grant, is, that force has any proper efficacy to enlighten the understanding, or produce belief. And from thence he infers, that therefore the magistrate cannot lawfully compel men in matters of religion. This is what the author says, and what I imagine will always hold true, whatever you or any one can say or think to the contrary.

That which you say is, "Force indirectly and at a distance may do some service." What you mean by

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doing service at a distance, towards the bringing men to salvation, or to embrace the truth, I confess I do not understand; unless, perhaps, it be what others, in propriety of speech, call by accident. But be it what it will, it is such a service as cannot be ascribed to the direct and proper efficacy of force. And so, say you, "Force, indirectly, and at a distance, may do some service." I grant it: make your best of it. What do you conclude from thence, to your purpose? That therefore the magistrate may make use of it? That I deny, that such an indirect, and at a distance usefulness, will authorize the civil power in the use of it, that will never be proved. Loss of estate and dignities may make a proud man humble: sufferings and imprisonment may make a wild and debauched man sober: and so these things may "indirectly, and at a distance, be serviceable towards the salvation of men's souls." I doubt not but God has made some, or all of these, the occasions of good to many men. But will you therefore infer, that the magistrate may take away a man's honour, or estate, or liberty, for the salvation of his soul; or torment him in this, that he may be happy in the other world? What is otherwise unlawful in itself, as it certainly is to punish a man without a fault, can never be made lawful by some good that, indirectly, and at a distance, or, if you please, indirectly, and by accident, may follow from it. Running a man through may save his life, as it has done by chance, opening a lurking imposthume. But will you say, therefore, that this is lawful, justifiable chirurgery? The galleys, it is like, might reduce many a vain, loose protestant to repentance, sobriety of thought, and a true sense of religion: and the torments they suffered in the late persecution, might make several consider the pains of hell, and put a due estimate of vanity and contempt on all things of this world. But will you say, because those punishments might, indirectly, and at a distance, serve to the salvation of men's souls, that therefore the king of France had right authority to make use of them? If your indirect and at a distance serviceableness may

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authorize the magistrate to use force in religion, all the cruelties used by the heathens against Christians, by papists against protestants, and all the persecuting of Christians one among another, are all justifiable.

But what if I should tell you now of other effects, contrary effects, that punishments in matters of religion may produce; and so may serve to keep men from the truth and from salvation? What then will become of your indirect and at a distance usefulness? For in all pleas for any thing because of its usefulness, it is not enough to say as you do, and is the utmost that can be said for it, that it may be serviceable: but it must be considered not only what it may, but what it is likely to produce: and the greater good or harm like to come from it, ought to determine the use of it. To show you what effects one may expect from force, of what usefulness it is to bring men to embrace the truth, be pleased to read what you yourself have writ: "I cannot but remark, say you, that these methods (viz. depriving men of estates, corporal punishment, starving and tormenting them in prisons, and in the end even taking away their lives, to make them Christians) are so very improper in respect to the design of them, that they usually produce the quite contrary effect. For whereas all the use which force can have for the advancing true religion and the salvation of souls, is (as has already been showed) by disposing men to submit to instruction, and to give a fair hearing to the reasons which are offered for the enlightening their minds, and discovering the truth to them; these cruelties have the misfortune to be commonly looked upon as so just a prejudice against any religion that uses them, as makes it needless to look any farther into it: and to tempt men to reject it, as both false and detestable, without ever vouchsafing to consider the rational grounds and motives of it. This effect they seldom fail to work upon the sufferers of them. And as to the spectators, if they be not beforehand well instructed in those grounds and motives, they will be much tempted, likewise, not only to entertain the same opinion of such a

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religion, but withal to judge much more favourably of that of the sufferers; who, they will be apt to think, would not expose themselves to such extremities, which they might avoid by compliance, if they were not thoroughly satisfied of the justice of their cause." Here then you allow that taking away men's estates, or liberty, and corporal punishments, are apt to drive away both sufferers and spectators from the religion that makes use of them, rather than to it. And so these you renounce. Now, if you give up punishments of a man, in his person, liberty, and estate, I think we need not stand with you, for any other punishments that may be made use of. But, by what follows, it seems you shelter yourself under the name of severities. For moderate punishments, as you call them in another place, you think may be serviceable; indirectly, and at a distance serviceable, to bring men to the truth. And I say, any sort of punishments disproportioned to the offence, or where there is no fault at all, will always be severity, unjustifiable severity, and will be thought so by the sufferers and bystanders; and so will usually produce the effects you have mentioned, contrary to the design they are used for. Not to profess the national faith, whilst one believes it not to be true; not to enter into church communion with the magistrate as long as one judges the doctrine there professed to be erroneous, or the worship not such as God has either prescribed or will accept; this you allow, and all the world with you must allow, not to be a fault. But yet you would have men punished for not being of the national religion; that is, as you yourself confess, for no fault at all. Whether this be not severity, nay so open and avowed injustice, that it will give men a just prejudice against the religion that uses it, and produce all those ill effects you there mention, I leave you to consider. So that the name of severities, in opposition to the moderate punishments you speak for, can do you no service at all. For where there is no fault, there can be no moderate punishment: all punishment is immoderate, where there is no fault to be punished. But of your moderate punishment we shall have

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occasion to speak more in another place. It suffices here to have shown, that whatever punishments you use, they are as likely to drive men from the religion that uses them, as to bring them to the truth; and much more likely, as we shall see before we have done: and so by your own confession they are not to be used.

One thing in this passage of the author, it seems, appears absurd to you; that he should say, "That to take away men's lives, to make them Christians, was but an ill way of expressing a design of their salvation." I grant there is great absurdity somewhere in the case. But it is in the practice of those who, persecuting men under a pretence of bringing them to salvation, suffer the temper of their good-will to betray itself, in taking away their lives. And whatever absurdities there be in this way of proceeding, there is none in the author's way of expressing it; as you would more plainly have seen, if you had looked into the Latin original, where the words are, "Vitâ denique ipsâ privant, ut fideles, ut salvi fiant;" which, though more literally, might be thus rendered, "To bring them to the faith and to salvation;" yet the translator is not to be blamed, if he chose to express the sense of the author in words that very livelily represented the extreme absurdity they are guilty of, who, under pretence of zeal for the salvation of souls, proceed to the taking away their lives. An example whereof we have in a neighbouring country, where the prince declares he will have all his dissenting subjects saved, and pursuant thereunto has taken away the lives of many of them. For thither at last persecution must come; as I fear, notwithstanding your talk of moderate punishments, you yourself intimate in these words: "Not that I think the sword is to be used in this business (as I have sufficiently declared already), but because all coactive power resolves at last into the sword; since all (I do not say, that will not be reformed in this matter by lesser penalties, but) that refuse to submit to lesser penalties, must at last fall under the stroke of it." In which

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words, if you mean any thing to the business in hand, you seem to have a reserve for greater punishments, when lesser are not sufficient to bring men to be convinced. But let that pass.

You say, "If force be used, not instead of reason and arguments, that is, not to convince by its own proper efficacy, which it cannot do," &c. I think those who make laws, and use force, to bring men to church-conformity in religion, seek only the compliance, but concern themselves not for the conviction of those they punish; and so never use force to convince. For, pray tell me, when any dissenter conforms, and enters into the church-communion, is he ever examined to see whether he does it upon reason, and conviction, and such grounds as would become a Christian concerned for religion? If persecution, as is pretended, were for the salvation of men's souls, this would be done; and men not driven to take the sacrament to keep their places, or to obtain licences to sell ale, for so low have these holy things been prostituted; who perhaps knew nothing of its institution, and considered no other use of it but the securing some poor secular advantage, which without taking of it they should have lost. So that this exception of yours, of the "use of force, instead of arguments, to convince men," I think is needless; those who use it, not being, that ever I heard, concerned that men should be convinced.

But you go on in telling us your way of using force, "only to bring men to consider those reasons and arguments, which are proper and sufficient to convince them; but which, without being forced, they would not consider." And, say you, "who can deny but that, indirectly and at a distance, it does some service, towards bringing men to embrace that truth, which either through negligence they would never acquaint themselves with, or through prejudice they would reject and condemn unheard?" Whether this way of punishment is like to increase, or remove prejudice, we have already seen. And what that truth is, which you can positively say any man, "without being forced by punishment, would through carelessness never acquaint

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himself with," I desire you to name. Some are called at the third, some at the ninth, and some at the eleventh hour. And whenever they are called, they embrace all the truth necessary to salvation. But these slips may be forgiven, amongst so many gross and palpable mistakes, as appear to me all through your discourse. For example: you tell us that "force used to bring men to consider, does, indirectly, and at a distance, some service." Here now you walk in the dark, and endeavour to cover yourself with obscurity, by omitting two necessary parts. As, first, who must use this force: which, though you tell us not here, yet by other parts of your treatise it is plain you mean the magistrate. And, secondly, you omit to say upon whom it must be used, who it is must be punished: and those, if you say any thing to your purpose, must be dissenters from the national religion, those who come not into church-communion with the magistrate. And then your proposition, in fair plain terms, will stand thus: "If the magistrate punish dissenters, only to bring them to consider those reasons and arguments which are proper to convince them; who can deny but that, indirectly and at a distance, it may do service, &c. towards bringing men to embrace that truth which otherwise they would never be acquainted with?" &c. In which proposition, 1. There is something impracticable. 2. Something unjust. And, 3. Whatever efficacy there is in force, your way applied, to bring men to consider and be convinced, it makes against you.

1. It is impracticable to punish dissenters, as dissenters, only to make them consider. For if you punish them as dissenters, as certainly you do, if you punish them alone, and them all without exception, you punish them for not being of the national religion. And to punish a man for not being of the national religion, is not to punish him only to make him consider; unless not to be of the national religion, and not to consider, be the same thing. But you will say, the design is only to make dissenters consider; and therefore they may be punished only to make them consider. To this I reply; it is impossible you should punish one with a

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design only to make him consider, whom you punish for something else besides want of consideration; or if you punish him whether he consider or no; as you do, if you lay penalties on dissenters in general. If you should make a law to punish all stammerers; could any one believe you, if you said it was designed only to make them leave swearing? Would not every one see it was impossible that punishment should be only against swearing, when all stammerers were under the penalty? Such a proposal as this is, in itself, at first sight monstrously absurd. But you must thank yourself for it. For to lay penalties upon stammerers, only to make them not swear, is not more absurd and impossible than it is to lay penalties upon dissenters only to make them consider.

2. To punish men out of the communion of the national church, to make them consider, is unjust. They are punished, because out of the national church: and they are out of the national church, because they are not yet convinced. Their standing out therefore in this state, whilst they are not convinced, not satisfied in their minds, is no fault; and therefore cannot justly be punished. But your method is, "Punish them, to make them consider such reasons and arguments as are proper to convince them." Which is just such justice, as it would be for the magistrate to punish you for not being a Cartesian, "only to bring you to consider such reasons and arguments as are proper and sufficient to convince you:" when it is possible, 1. That you, being satisfied of the truth of your own opinion in philosophy, did not judge it worth while to consider that of Des Cartes. 2. It is possible you are not able to consider and examine all the proofs and grounds upon which he endeavours to establish his philosophy. 3. Possibly you have examined, and can find no reasons and arguments proper and sufficient to convince you.

3. Whatever indirect efficacy there be in force, applied by the magistrate your way, it makes against you. "Force used by the magistrate to bring men to consider those reasons and arguments, which are proper

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and sufficient to convince them, but which without being forced they would not consider; may, say you, be serviceable, indirectly and at a distance, to make men embrace the truth which must save them." And thus, say I, it may be serviceable to bring men to receive and embrace falsehood, which will destroy them. So that force and punishment, by your own confession, not being able directly, by its proper efficacy, to do men any good, in reference to their future estate; though it be sure directly to do them harm, in reference to their present condition here; and indirectly, and in your way of applying it, being proper to do at least as much harm as good; I desire to know what the usefulness is which so much recommends it, even to a degree that you pretend it needful and necessary. Had you some new untried chymical preparation, that was as proper to kill as to save an infirm man, of whose life I hope you would not be more tender than of a weak brother's soul; would you give it your child, or try it upon your friend, or recommend it to the world for its rare usefulness? I deal very favourably with you, when I say as proper to kill as to save. For force, in your indirect way, of the magistrate's "applying to make men consider those arguments that otherwise they would not; to make them lend an ear to those who tell them they have mistaken their way, and offer to show them the right;" I say, in this way, force is much more proper, and likely, to make men receive and embrace error than the truth.

1. Because men out of the right way are as apt, I think I may say, apter to use force, than others. For truth, I mean the truth of the Gospel, which is that of the true religion, is mild, and gentle, and meek, and apter to use prayers and entreaties, than force, to gain a hearing.

2. Because the magistrates of the world, or the civil sovereigns, as you think it more proper to call them, being few of them in the right way; not one of ten, take which side you will, perhaps you will grant not one of an hundred, being of the true religion; it is

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likely your indirect way of using of force would do an hundred, or at least ten times as much harm as good; especially if you consider, that as the magistrate will certainly use it to force men to hearken to the proper ministers of his religion, let it be what it will: so you having set no time, nor bounds, to this consideration of arguments and reasons, short of being convinced; you, under another pretence, put into the magistrate's hands as much power to force men to his religion, as any the openest persecutors can pretend to. For what difference, I beseech you, between punishing you to bring you to mass, and punishing you to consider those reasons and arguments which are proper and sufficient to convince you that you ought to go to mass? For till you are brought to consider reasons and arguments proper and sufficient to convince you, that is, till you are convinced, you are punished on. If you reply, you meant reasons and arguments proper and sufficient to convince them of the truth. I answer, if you meant so, why did you not say so? But if you had, it would in this case do you little service. For the mass, in France, is as much supposed the truth, as the liturgy here. And your way of applying force will as much promote popery in France, as protestantism in England. And so you see how serviceable it is to make men receive and embrace the truth that must save them.

However you tell us, in the same page, that "if force so applied, as is above-mentioned, may in such sort as has been said, *i. e.* indirectly and at a distance, be serviceable to bring men to receive and embrace truth, you think it sufficient to show the usefulness of it in religion:" where I shall observe, 1. That this usefulness amounts to no more but this, that it is not impossible but that it may be useful. And such an usefulness one cannot deny to auricular confession, doing of penance, going of a pilgrimage to some saint, and what not. Yet our church does not think fit to use them: though it cannot be denied, but they may have some of your indirect and at a distance usefulness; that is, perhaps may do some service indirectly and by accident. . . .

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2. Force, your way applied, as it may be useful, so also it may be useless. For, 1. Where the law punishes dissenters, without telling them it is to make them consider, they may through ignorance and oversight neglect to do it, and so your force proves useless. 2. Some dissenters may have considered already, and then force employed upon them must needs be useless: unless you can think it useful to punish a man to make him do that which he has done already. 3. God has not directed it: and therefore we have no reason to expect he should make it successful.

3. It may be hurtful: nay, it is likely to prove more hurtful than useful. 1. Because to punish men for that, which it is visible cannot be known whether they have performed or no, is so palpable an injustice, that it is likelier to give them an aversion to the persons and religion that uses it than to bring them to it. 2. Because the greatest part of mankind, being not able to discern betwixt truth and falsehood, that depend upon long and many proofs, and remote consequences; nor having ability enough to discover the false grounds, and resist the captious and fallacious arguments of learned men versed in controversies; are so much more exposed, by the force which is used to make them hearken to the information and instruction of men appointed to it by the magistrate, or those of his religion, to be led into falsehood and error, than they are likely this way to be brought to embrace the truth that must save them; by how much the national religions of the world are, beyond comparison, more of them false or erroneous, than such as have God for their author, and truth for their standard. And that seeking and examining, without the special grace of God, will not secure even knowing and learned men from error; we have a famous instance in the two Reynolds's, both scholars and brothers, but one a protestant, the other a papist, who, upon the exchange of papers between them, were both turned; but so that neither of them, with all the arguments he could use, could bring his brother back to the religion which he himself had found reason to em-

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brace. Here was ability to examine and judge, beyond the ordinary rate of most men. Yet one of these brothers was so caught by the sophistry and skill of the other, that he was brought into error, from which he could never again be extricated. This we must unavoidably conclude; unless we can think, that wherein they differed they were both in the right; or that truth can be an argument to support a falsehood; both which are impossible. And now, I pray, which of these two brothers would you have punished, to make him bethink himself, and bring him back to the truth? For it is certain some ill-grounded cause of assent alienated one of them from it. If you will examine your principles, you will find that according to your rule, the papist must be punished in England, and the protestant in Italy. So that, in effect, by your rule, passion, humour, prejudice, lust, impressions of education, admiration of persons, worldly respect, and the like incompetent motives, must always be supposed on that side on which the magistrate is not.

I have taken the pains here, in a short recapitulation, to give you the view of the usefulness of force, your way applied, which you make such a noise with, and lay so much stress on. Whereby I doubt not but it is visible, that its usefulness and uselessness laid in the balance against each other, the pretended usefulness is so far from outweighing, that it can neither encourage nor excuse the using of punishments; which are not lawful to be used in our case without strong probability of success. But when to its uselessness mischief is added, and it is evident that more, much more, harm may be expected from it than good, your own argument returns upon you. For if it be reasonable to use it, because it may be serviceable to promote true religion, and the salvation of souls; it is much more reasonable to let it alone, if it may be more serviceable to the promoting falsehood, and the perdition of souls. And therefore you will do well hereafter not to build so much on the usefulness of force, applied your way, your indirect and at a distance usefulness, which amounts but to the shadow and possibility of usefulness, but with an over-

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balancing weight of mischief and harm annexed to it. For upon a just estimate, this indirect, and at a distance, usefulness, can directly go for nothing; or rather less than nothing.

But suppose force, applied your way, were as useful for the promoting true religion, as I suppose I have showed it to be the contrary; it does not from hence follow that it is lawful and may be used. It may be very useful in a parish that has no teacher, or as bad as none, that a layman who wanted not abilities for it, for such we may suppose to be, should sometimes preach to them the doctrine of the Gospel, and stir them up to the duties of a good life. And yet this, (which cannot be denied, may be at least "indirectly, and at a distance, serviceable towards the promoting true religion, and the salvation of souls,") you will not, I imagine, allow, for this usefulness, to be lawful: and that, because he has not commission and authority to do it. The same might be said of the administration of the sacraments, and any other function of the priestly office. This is just our case. Granting force, as you say, indirectly and at a distance, useful to the salvation of men's souls; yet it does not therefore follow that it is lawful for the magistrate to use it: because, as the author says, the magistrate has no commission or authority to do so. For however you have put it thus, as you have framed the author's argument, "force is utterly of no use for the promoting of true religion, and the salvation of souls; and therefore nobody can have any right to use any force or compulsion for the bringing men to the true religion;" yet the author does not, in those pages you quote, make the latter of these propositions an inference barely from the former; but makes use of it as a truth proved by several arguments he had before brought to that purpose. For though it be a good argument; it is not useful, therefore not fit to be used; yet this will not be good logic; it is useful, therefore any one has a right to use it. For if the usefulness makes it lawful, it makes it lawful in any hands that can so apply it; and so private men may use it.

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"Who can deny," say you, "but that force, indirectly and at a distance, may do some service towards the bringing men to embrace that truth, which otherwise they would never acquaint themselves with?" If this be good arguing in you, for the usefulness of force towards the saving of men's souls, give me leave to argue after the same fashion. 1. I will suppose, which you will not deny me, that as there are many who take up their religion upon wrong grounds, to the endangering of their souls; so there are many that abandon themselves to the heat of their lusts, to the endangering of their souls. 2. I will suppose, that as force applied your way is apt to make the inconsiderate consider, so force applied another way is apt to make the lascivious chaste. The argument then, in your form, will stand thus: "Who can deny but that force, indirectly and at a distance, may, by castration, do some service towards bringing men to embrace that chastity, which otherwise they would never acquit themselves with." Thus, you see, "castration may, indirectly and at a distance, be serviceable towards the salvation of men's souls." But will you say, from such an usefulness as this, because it may, indirectly and at a distance, conduce to the saving of any of his subjects' souls, that therefore the magistrate has a right to do it, and may by force make his subjects eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven? It is not for the magistrate, or any body else, upon an imagination of its usefulness, to make use of any other means for the salvation of men's souls than what the author and finisher of our faith hath directed. You may be mistaken in what you think useful. Dives thought, and so perhaps should you and I too, if not better informed by the Scriptures, that it would be useful to rouse and awaken men if one should come to them from the dead. But he was mistaken. And we are told, that if men will not hearken to Moses and the prophets, the means appointed; neither will the strangeness nor terror of one coming from the dead persuade them. If what we are apt to think useful were thence to be concluded so, we should, I fear, be obliged to believe the miracles pretended to by the church of Rome.

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For miracles, we know, were once useful for the promoting true religion, and the salvation of souls; which is more than you say for your political punishments: but yet we must conclude that God thinks them not useful now; unless we will say, that which without impiety cannot be said, that the wise and benign Disposer and Governor of all things does not now use all useful means for promoting his own honour in the world, and the good of souls. I think this consequence will hold, as well as what you draw in near the same words.

Let us not therefore be more wise than our Maker, in that stupendous and supernatural work of our salvation. The Scripture, that reveals it to us, contains all that we can know, or do, in order to it: and where that is silent, it is in us presumption to direct. When you can show any commission in Scripture, for the use of force to compel men to hear, any more than to embrace, the doctrine of others that differ from them, we shall have reason to submit to it, and the magistrate have some ground to set up this new way of persecution. But till then, it will be fit for us to obey that precept of the Gospel, which bids us "take heed what we hear," Mark iv. 24. So that hearing is not always so useful as you suppose. If it had, we should never have had so direct a caution against it. It is not any imaginary usefulness, you can suppose, which can make that a punishable crime, which the magistrate was never authorized to meddle with. "Go and teach all nations," was a commission of our Saviour's: but there was not added to it, punish those that will not hear and consider what you say. No, but "if they will not receive you, shake off the dust of your feet;" leave them, and apply yourselves to some others. And St. Paul knew no other means to make men hear, but the preaching of the Gospel; as will appear to any one who will read Romans x. 14, &c. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

You go on, and in favour of your beloved force you tell us that it is not only useful but needful. And here, after having at large, in the four following pages, set out the negligence or aversion, or other hinderances

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that keep men from examining, with that application and freedom of judgment they should, the grounds upon which they take up and persist in their religion; you come to conclude force necessary. Your words are: "If men are generally averse to a due consideration of things, where they are most concerned to use it; if they usually take up their religion without examining it as they ought, and then grow so opinionative and so stiff in their prejudice, that neither the gentlest admonitions, nor the most earnest entreaties, shall ever prevail with them afterwards to do it; what means is there left, besides the grace of God, to reduce those of them that are gone into a wrong way, but to lay thorns and briars in it? That since they are deaf to all persuasions, the uneasiness they meet with may at least put them to a stand, and incline them to lend an ear to those who tell them they have mistaken their way, and offer to show them the right." What means is there left, say you, but force? What to do? "To reduce men, who are out of it, into the right way." So you tell us here. And to that, I say, there is other means besides force; that which was appointed and made use of from the beginning, the preaching of the Gospel.

"But, say you, to make them hear, to make them consider, to make them examine, there is no other means but punishment; and therefore it is necessary."

I answer, 1. What if God, for reasons best known to himself, would not have men compelled to hear; but thought the good tidings of salvation, and the proposals of life and death, means and inducements enough to make them hear, and consider, now as well as heretofore? Then your means, your punishments, are not necessary. What if God would have men left to their freedom in this point, if they will hear, or if they will forbear, will you constrain them? Thus we are sure he did with his own people: and this when they were in captivity, Ezek. xi. 5, 7. And it is very like were ill-treated for being of a different religion from the national, and so were punished as dissenters. Yet then God expected not that those punishments should force

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them to hearken more than at other times: as appears by Ezek. iii. 11. And this also is the method of the Gospel. "We are ambassadors for Christ; as if God did beseech you in Christ's stead," says St. Paul, 2 Cor. v. 20. If God thought it necessary to have men punished to make them give ear, he could have called magistrates to be spreaders and ministers of the Gospel, as well as poor fishermen, or Paul a persecutor; who yet wanted not power to punish where punishment was necessary, as is evident in Ananias and Sapphira, and the incestuous Corinthian.

2. What if God, foreseeing this force would be in the hands of men as passionate, humoursome, as liable to prejudice and error as the rest of their brethren, did not think it a proper means to bring men into the right way?

3. What if there be other means? Then yours ceases to be necessary, upon the account that there is no means left. For you yourself allow, "That the grace of God is another means." And I suppose you will not deny it to be both a proper and sufficient means; and, which is more, the only means; such means as can work by itself, and without which all the force in the world can do nothing. God alone can open the ear that it may hear, and open the heart that it may understand: and this he does in his own good time, and to whom he is graciously pleased; but not according to the will and fancy of man, when he thinks fit, by punishments, to compel his brethren. If God has pronounced against any person or people, what he did against the Jews, (Isa. vi. 10) "Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed;" will all the force you can use be a means to make them hear and understand, and be converted?

But, sir, to return to your argument; you see "no other means left (taking the world as we now find it) to make men thoroughly and impartially examine a religion, which they embraced upon such inducements

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as ought to have no sway at all in the matter, and with little or no examination of the proper grounds of it." And thence you conclude the use of force, by the magistrates upon dissenters, necessary. And, I say, I see no other means left, (taking the world as we now find it, wherein the magistrates never lay penalties, for matters of religion, upon those of their own church, nor is it to be expected they ever should;) "to make men" of the national church, any where, "thoroughly and impartially examine a religion, which they embraced upon such inducements as ought to have no sway at all in the matter, and therefore with little or no examination of the proper grounds of it." And therefore I conclude the use of force by dissenters upon conformists necessary. I appeal to the world, whether this be not as just and natural a conclusion as yours. Though, if you will have my opinion, I think the more genuine consequence is, that force, to make men examine matters of religion, is not necessary at all. But you may take which of these consequences you please. Both of them, I am sure, you cannot avoid. It is not for you and me, out of an imagination that they may be useful, or are necessary, to prescribe means in the great and mysterious work of salvation, other than what God himself has directed. God has appointed force as useful or necessary, and therefore it is to be used; is a way of arguing, becoming the ignorance and humility of poor creatures. But I think force useful or necessary, and therefore it is to be used; has, methinks, a little too much presumption in it. You ask, "What means else is there left?" None, say I, to be used by man, but what God himself has directed in the Scriptures, wherein are contained all the means and methods of salvation. "Faith is the gift of God." And we are not to use any other means to procure this gift to any one, but what God himself has prescribed. If he has there appointed that any should be forced "to hear those who tell them they have mistaken their way, and offer to show them the right;" and that they should be punished by the magistrate if they did not; it will be past doubt, it is to be made use of. But till

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that can be done, it will be in vain to say what other means is there left. If all the means God has appointed, to make men hear and consider, be "exhortation in season and out of season," &c. together with prayer for them, and the example of meekness and a good life; this is all ought to be done, "Whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear."

By these means the Gospel at first made itself to be heard through a great part of the world; and in a crooked and perverse generation, led away by lusts, humours, and prejudice, as well as this you complain of, prevailed with men to hear and embrace the truth, and take care of their own souls; without the assistance of any such force of the magistrate, which you now think needful. But whatever neglect or aversion there is in some men, impartially and thoroughly to be instructed; there will upon a due examination, I fear, be found no less a neglect and aversion in others, impartially and thoroughly to instruct them. It is not the talking even general truths in plain and clear language, much less a man's own fancies in scholastic or uncommon ways of speaking, an hour or two, once a week in public, that is enough to instruct even willing hearers in the way of salvation, and the grounds of their religion. They are not politic discourses which are the means of right information in the foundations of religion. For with such, sometimes venting anti-monarchical principles, sometimes again preaching up nothing but absolute monarchy and passive obedience, as the one or other have been in vogue, and the way to preferment; have our churches rung in their turns, so loudly, that reasons and arguments proper and sufficient to convince men of the truth in the controverted points of religion, and to direct them in the right way to salvation, were scarce any where to be heard. But how many, do you think, by friendly and Christian debates with them at their houses, and by the gentle methods of the Gospel made use of in private conversation, might have been brought into the church; who, by railing from the pulpit, ill and unfriendly treatment out of it, and other neglects and miscarriages of those who claimed to be their teachers,

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have been driven from hearing them? Paint the defects and miscarriages frequent on this side, as well as you have done those on the other, and then do you, with all the world, consider whether those whom you so handsomely declaim against, for being misled by "education, passion, humour, prejudice, obstinacy," &c. do deserve all the punishment. Perhaps it will be answered; if there be so much toil in it, that particular persons must be applied to, who then will be a minister? And what if a layman should reply: if there be so much toil in it, that doubts must be cleared, prejudices removed, foundations examined, &c. who then will be a protestant? the excuse will be as good hereafter for the one as for the other.

This new method of yours, which you say "nobody can deny but that indirectly, and at a distance, it does some service towards bringing men to embrace the truth," was never yet thought on by the most refined persecutors. Though indeed it is not altogether unlike the plea made use of to excuse the late barbarous usage of the protestants in France, designed to extirpate the reformed religion there, from being a persecution for religion. The French king requires all his subjects to come to mass: those who do not, are punished with a witness. For what? Not for their religion, say the pleaders for that discipline, but for disobeying the king's laws. So by your rule, the dissenters, for thither you would, and thither you must come, if you mean any thing, must be punished. For what? Not for their religion, say you; not for "following the light of their own reason; not for obeying the dictates of their own consciences." That you think not fit. For what then are they to be punished? "To make them," say you, "examine the religion they have embraced, and the religion they have rejected." So that they are punished, not for having offended against a law: for there is no law of the land that requires them to examine. And which now is the fairer plea, pray judge. You ought, indeed, to have the credit of this new invention. All other law-makers have constantly taken this method, that where any thing was to be amended,

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the fault was first declared, and then penalties denounced against all those, who, after a time set, should be found guilty of it. This the common sense of mankind, and the very reason of laws, which are intended not for punishment, but correction, has made so plain, that the subtilest and most refined law-makers have not got out of this course; nor have the most ignorant and barbarous nations missed it. But you have outdone Solon and Lycurgus, Moses and our Saviour, and are resolved to be a law-maker of a way by yourself. It is an old and obsolete way, and will not serve your turn, to begin with warnings and threats of penalties to be inflicted on those who do not reform, but continue to do that which you think they fail in. To allow of impunity to the innocent, or the opportunity of amendment to those who would avoid the penalties, are formalities not worth your notice. You are for a shorter and surer way. Take a whole tribe, and punish them at all adventures; whether guilty or no of the miscarriage which you would have amended; or without so much as telling them what it is you would have them do, but leaving them to find it out if they can. All these absurdities are contained in your way of proceeding; and are impossible to be avoided by any one who will punish dissenters, and only dissenters, to make them "consider and weigh the grounds of their religion, and impartially examine whether it be true or no; and upon what grounds they took it up, that so they may find and embrace the truth that must save them." But that this new sort of discipline may have all fair play, let us inquire first, who it is you would have be punished. In the place above cited, they are "those who are got into a wrong way, and are deaf to all persuasions." If these are the men to be punished, let a law be made against them: you have my consent; and that is the proper course to have offenders punished. For you do not, I hope, intend to punish any fault by a law, which you do not name in the law; nor make a law against any fault you would not have punished. And now, if you are sincere, and in earnest, and are, as a fair man should be, for what your words plainly signify, and nothing else;

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what will such a law serve for? Men in the wrong way are to be punished: but who are in the wrong way is the question. You have no more reason to determine it against one who differs from you, than he has to conclude against you, who differ from him: no, not though you have the magistrate and the national church on your side. For, if to differ from them be to be in the wrong way, you, who are in the right way in England, will be in the wrong way in France. Every one here must be judge for himself; and your law will reach nobody till you have convinced him he is in the wrong way. And then there will be no need of punishment to make him consider; unless you will affirm again, what you have denied, and have men punished for embracing the religion they believe to be true, when it differs from yours or the public.

Besides being in the wrong way, those whom you would have punished must be such as are deaf to all persuasions. But any such, I suppose, you will hardly find, who hearken to nobody, not to those of their own way. If you mean by deaf to all persuasions, all persuasions of a contrary party, or of a different church, such, I suppose, you may abundantly find in your own church, as well as elsewhere; and I presume to them you are so charitable, that you would not have them punished for not lending an ear to seducers. For constancy in the truth, and perseverance in the faith, is, I hope, rather to be encouraged, than by any penalties checked in the orthodox. And your church, doubtless, as well as all others, is orthodox to itself in all its tenets. If you mean by all persuasion, all your persuasion, or all persuasion of those of your communion; you do but beg the question, and suppose you have a right to punish those who differ from, and will not comply with you.

Your next words are, "When men fly from the means of a right information, and will not so much as consider how reasonable it is thoroughly and impartially to examine a religion which they embraced upon such inducements as ought to have no sway at all in the matter; and therefore with little or no examination

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of the proper grounds of it; what human method can be used to bring them to act like men, in an affair of such consequence, and to make a wiser and more rational choice, but that of laying such penalties upon them, as may balance the weight of those prejudices which inclined them to prefer a false way before the true; and recover them to so much sobriety and reflection as seriously to put the question to themselves, whether it be really worth the while to undergo such inconveniencies, for adhering to a religion, which, for any thing they know, may be false, or for rejecting another (if that be the case), which, for any thing they know, may be true, till they have brought it to the bar of reason, and given it a fair trial there?" Here you again bring in such as prefer a false way before a true: to which having answered already, I shall here say no more, but that, since our church will not allow those to be in a false way who are out of the church of Rome, because the church of Rome, which pretends infallibility, declares hers to be the only true way; certainly no one of our church, nor any other, which claims not infallibility, can require any one to take the testimony of any church, as a sufficient proof of the truth of her own doctrine. So that true and false, as it commonly happens, when we suppose them for ourselves, or our party, in effect, signify just nothing, or nothing to the purpose; unless we can think that true or false in England, which will not be so at Rome, or Geneva: and *vice versâ*. As for the rest of the description of those on whom you are here laying penalties; I beseech you consider whether it will not belong to any of your church, let it be what it will. Consider, I say, if there be none in your church "who have embraced her religion upon such inducements as ought to have no sway at all in the matter, and therefore with little or no examination of the proper grounds of it; who have not been inclined by prejudices; who do not adhere to a religion, which, for any thing they know, may be false, and who have rejected another which, for any thing they know, may be true." If you have any such in your communion, and it will be an admirable, though

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I fear but a little, flock that has none such in it; consider well what you have done. You have prepared rods for them, for which I imagine they will con you no thanks. For to make any tolerable sense of what you here propose, it must be understood that you would have men of all religions punished, to make them consider "whether it be really worth the while to undergo such inconveniencies for adhering to a religion which for any thing they know may be false." If you hope to avoid that, by what you have said of true and false; and pretend that the supposed preference of the true way in your church ought to preserve its members from your punishment; you manifestly trifle. For every church's testimony, that it has chosen the true way, must be taken for itself; and then none will be liable; and your new invention of punishment is come to nothing: or else the differing churches' testimonies must be taken one for another; and then they will be all out of the true way, and your church need penalties as well as the rest. So that, upon your principles, they must all or none be punished. Choose which you please: one of them, I think, you cannot escape.

What you say in the next words: "Where instruction is stiffly refused, and all admonitions and persuasions prove vain and ineffectual;" differs nothing, but in the way of expressing, from deaf to all persuasions: and so that is answered already.

In another place, you give us another description of those you think ought to be punished, in these words: "Those who refuse to embrace the doctrine, and submit to the spiritual government of the proper ministers of religion, who by special designation are appointed to exhort, admonish, reprove," &c. Here then, those to be punished, "are such who refuse to embrace the doctrine, and submit to the government of the proper ministers of religion." Whereby we are as much still at uncertainty as we were before, who those are, who by your scheme and laws suitable to it are to be punished. Since every church has, as it thinks, its proper ministers of religion. And if you mean those that refuse to embrace the doctrine, and submit to the government

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of the ministers of another church; then all men will be guilty, and must be punished; even those of your church as well as others. If you mean those who refuse, &c. the ministers of their own church, very few will incur your penalties. But if, by these proper ministers of religion, the ministers of some particular church are intended, why do you not name it? Why are you so reserved in a matter wherein, if you speak not out, all the rest that you say will be to no purpose? Are men to be punished for refusing to embrace the doctrine, and submit to the government, of the proper ministers of the church of Geneva? For this time, since you have declared nothing to the contrary, let me suppose you of that church; and then, I am sure, that is it that you would name. For of whatever church you are, if you think the ministers of any one church ought to be hearkened to, and obeyed, it must be those of your own. There are persons to be punished, you say. This you contend for all through your book; and lay so much stress on it, that you make the preservation and propagation of religion, and the salvation of souls, to depend on it; and yet you describe them by so general and equivocal marks, that, unless it be upon suppositions which nobody will grant you, I dare say, neither you nor any body else will be able to find one guilty. Pray find me, if you can, a man whom you can judicially prove (for he that is to be punished by law must be fairly tried) is in a wrong way, in respect of his faith; I mean, "who is deaf to all persuasions, who flies from all means of a right information, who refuses to embrace the doctrine, and submit to the government of the spiritual pastors." And when you have done that, I think I may allow you what power you please to punish him, without any prejudice to the toleration the author of the letter proposes.

But why, I pray, all this boggling, all this loose talking, as if you knew not what you meant, or durst not speak it out? Would you be for punishing somebody, you know not whom? I do not think so ill of you. Let me then speak out for you. The evidence

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of the argument has convinced you that men ought not to be persecuted for their religion; that the severities in use amongst Christians cannot be defended; that the magistrate has not authority to compel any one to his religion. This you are forced to yield. But you would fain retain some power in the magistrate's hands to punish dissenters, upon a new pretence; viz. not for having embraced the doctrine and worship they believe to be true and right, but for not having well considered their own and the magistrate's religion. To show you that I do not speak wholly without book, give me leave to mind you of one passage of yours. The words are, "Penalties to put them upon a serious and impartial examination of the controversy between the magistrates and them." Though these words be not intended to tell us who you would have punished, yet it may be plainly inferred from them. And they more clearly point out whom you aim at than all the foregoing places, where you seem to (and should) describe them. For they are such as between whom and the magistrate there is a controversy; that is, in short, who differ from the magistrate in religion. And now indeed you have given us a note by which these you would have punished may be made known. We have, with much ado, found out at last whom it is we may presume you would have punished. Which in other cases is usually not very difficult; because there the faults to be mended easily design the persons to be corrected. But yours is a new method, and unlike all that ever went before it.

In the next place, let us see for what you would have them punished. You tell us, and it will easily be granted you, that not to examine and weigh impartially, and without prejudice or passion, all which, for shortness' sake, we will express by this one word consider, the religion one embraces or refuses, is a fault very common, and very prejudicial to true religion, and the salvation of men's souls. But penalties and punishments are very necessary, say you, to remedy this evil.

Let us see now how you apply this remedy. Therefore, say you, let all dissenters be punished. Why? Have no dissenters considered of religion? Or have all

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conformists considered? That you yourself will not say. Your project, therefore, is just as reasonable, as if a lethargy growing epidemical in England, you should propose to have a law made to blister and scarify and shave the heads of all who wear gowns: though it be certain that neither all who wear gowns are lethargic, nor all who are lethargic wear gowns:

——— Dii te Damasippe deæque
Verum ob consilium donent tonsore.

For there could not be certainly a more learned advice, than that one man should be pulled by the ears, because another is asleep. This, when you have considered of it again, for I find, according to your principle, all men have now and then need to be jogged, you will, I guess, be convinced is not, like a fair physician, to apply a remedy to a disease; but, like an enraged enemy, to vent one's spleen upon a party. Common sense, as well as common justice, requires, that the remedies of laws and penalties should be directed against the evil that is to be removed, wherever it be found. And if the punishment you think so necessary be, as you pretend, to cure the mischief you complain of, you must let it pursue and fall on the guilty, and those only, in what company soever they are; and not, as you here propose, and is the highest injustice, punish the innocent considering dissenter with the guilty; and, on the other side, let the inconsiderate guilty conformist escape with the innocent. For one may rationally presume that the national church has some, nay more in proportion, of those who little consider or concern themselves about religion, than any congregation of dissenters. For conscience, or the care of their souls, being once laid aside, interest of course leads men into that society where the protection and countenance of the government, and hopes of preferment, bid fairest to their remaining desires. So that if careless, negligent, inconsiderate men in matters of religion, who without being forced would not consider, are to be roused into a care of their souls, and a search after truth, by punishments, the national religion, in all countries, will

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certainly have a right to the greatest share of those punishments; at least, not to be wholly exempt from them.

This is that which the author of the letter, as I remember, complains of; and that justly, viz. "That the pretended care of men's souls always expresses itself, in those who would have force any way made use of to that end, in very unequal methods; some persons being to be treated with severity, whilst others guilty of the same faults are not to be so much as touched." Though you are got pretty well out of the deep mud, and renounce punishments directly for religion, yet you stick still in this part of the mire, whilst you would have dissenters punished to make them consider, but would not have any thing done to conformists, though ever so negligent in this point of considering. The author's letter pleased me, because it is equal to all mankind, is direct, and will, I think, hold every where; which I take to be a good mark of truth. For I shall always suspect that neither to comport with the truth of religion nor the design of the Gospel, which is suited to only some one country, or party. What is true and good in England, will be true and good at Rome too, in China, or Geneva. But whether your great and only method for the propagating of truth, by bringing the inconsiderate by punishments to consider, would, according to your way of applying your punishments only to dissenters from the national religion, be of use in those countries, or any where but where you suppose the magistrate to be in the right, judge you. Pray, sir, consider a little, whether prejudice has not some share in your way of arguing. For this is your position: "Men are generally negligent in examining the grounds of their religion." This I grant. But could there be a more wild and incoherent consequence drawn from it, than this: "therefore dissenters must be punished?"

But that being laid aside, let us now see to what end they must be punished. Sometimes it is, "To bring them to consider those reasons and arguments which are proper and sufficient to convince them." Of what?

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That it is not easy to set Grantham steeple upon Paul's church? Whatever it be you would have them convinced of, you are not willing to tell us. And so it may be any thing. Sometimes it is, "To incline them to lend an ear to those who tell them they have mistaken their way, and offer to show them the right:" which is, to lend an ear to all who differ from them in religion, as well crafty seducers, as others. Whether this be for the procuring the salvation of their souls, the end for which you say this force is to be used, judge you. But this I am sure; whoever will lend an ear to all who will tell them they are out of the way, will not have much time for any other business.

Sometimes it is, "To recover men to so much sobriety and reflection, as seriously to put the question to themselves, whether it be really worth their while to undergo such inconveniencies, for adhering to a religion which, for any thing they know, may be false; or for rejecting another (if that be the case) which, for aught they know, may be true, till they have brought it to the bar of reason, and given it a fair trial there." Which, in short, amounts to thus much, viz. "to make them examine whether their religion be true, and so worth the holding, under those penalties that are annexed to it." Dissenters are indebted to you for your great care of their souls. But what, I beseech you, shall become of those of the national church, every where, which make far the greater part of mankind, who have no such punishments to make them consider; who have not this only remedy provided for them, but are left in that deplorable condition you mention, "of being suffered quietly, and without molestation, to take no care at all of their souls, or in doing of it to follow their own prejudices, humours, or some crafty seducers?" Need not those of the national church, as well as others, "bring their religion to the bar of reason, and gave it a fair trial there?" And if they need to do so, as they must, if all national religions cannot be supposed true; they will always need that which, you say, is the only means to make them do so. So that if you are sure, as you tell us,

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that there is need of your method; I am sure there is as much need of it in national churches as any other. And so, for aught I can see, you must either punish them, or let others alone; unless you think it reasonable that the far greater part of mankind should constantly be without that sovereign and only remedy, which they stand in need of equally with other people.

Sometimes the end for which men must be punished is, "to dispose them to submit to instruction, and to give a fair hearing to the reasons offered for the enlightening their minds, and discovering the truth to them." If their own words may be taken for it, there are as few dissenters as conformists, in any country, who will not profess they have done, and do this. And if their own words may not be taken, who, I pray, must be judge? You and your magistrates? If so, then it is plain you punish them, not to dispose them to submit to instruction, but to your instruction; not to dispose them to give a fair hearing to reasons offered for the enlightening their minds, but to give an obedient hearing to your reasons. If you mean this; it had been fairer and shorter to have spoken out plainly, than thus in fair words, of indefinite signification, to say that which amounts to nothing. For what sense is it, to punish a man "to dispose him to submit to instruction, and give a fair hearing to reasons offered for enlightening his mind, and discovering truth to him," who goes two or three times a week several miles on purpose to do it, and that with the hazard of his liberty or purse? unless you mean your instructions, your reasons, your truth: which brings us but back to what you have disclaimed, plain persecution for differing in religion.

Sometimes this is to be done, "to prevail with men to weigh matters of religion carefully and impartially." Discountenance and punishment put into one scale, with impunity and hopes of preferment put into the other, is as sure a way to make a man weigh impartially, as it would be for a prince to bribe and threaten a judge to make him judge uprightly.

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Sometimes it is, "To make men bethink themselves, and put it out of the power of any foolish humour, or unreasonable prejudice, to alienate them from truth and their own happiness." Add but this, to put it out of the power of any humour or prejudice of their own, or other men's; and I grant the end is good, if you can find the means to procure it. But why it should not be put out of the power of other men's humour or prejudice, as well as their own, wants, and will always want, a reason to prove. Would it not, I beseech you, to an indifferent bystander, appear humour, or prejudice, or something as bad, to see men, who profess a religion revealed from heaven, and which they own contains all in it necessary to salvation, exclude men from their communion, and persecute them with the penalties of the civil law, for not joining in the use of ceremonies which are nowhere to be found in that revealed religion? Would it not appear humour, or prejudice, or some such thing, to a sober impartial heathen, to see Christians exclude and persecute one of the same faith, for things which they themselves confess to be indifferent, and not worth the contending for? "Prejudice, humour, passion, lusts, impressions of education, reverence and admiration of persons, worldly respects, love of their own choice, and the like," to which you justly impute many men's taking up, and persisting in their religion, are indeed good words; and so, on the other side, are these following; "truth, the right way, enlightening reason, sound judgment;" but they signify nothing at all to your purpose, till you can evidently and unquestionably show the world that the latter, viz. "truth and the right way," &c. are always, and in all countries, to be found only in the national church; and the former, viz. "passion and prejudice," &c. only amongst the dissenters. But to go on:

Sometimes it is, "to bring men to take such care as they ought of their salvation." What care is such as men ought to take, whilst they are out of your church, will be hard for you to tell me. But you endeavour to explain yourself in the following words: "that they

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may not blindly leave it to the choice neither of any other person, nor yet of their own lusts and passions, to prescribe to them what faith or what worship they shall embrace." You do well to make use of punishment to shut passion out of the choice: because you know fear of suffering is no passion. But let that pass. You would have men punished, "to bring them to take such care of their salvation, that they may not blindly leave it to the choice of any other person to prescribe to them." Are you sincere? Are you in earnest? Tell me then truly: did the magistrate or national church, any where, or yours in particular, ever punish any man, to bring him to have this care, which, you say, he ought to take of his salvation? Did you ever punish any man, that he might not blindly leave it to the choice of his parish-priest, or bishop, or the convocation, what faith or worship he should embrace? It will be suspected care of a party, or any thing else rather than care of the salvation of men's souls; if, having found out so useful, so necessary a remedy, the only method there is room left for, you will apply it but partially, and make trial of it only on those whom you have truly least kindness for. This will, unavoidably, give one reason to imagine, you do not think so well of your remedy as you pretend, who are so sparing of it to your friends; but are very free of it to strangers, who in other things are used very much like enemies.—But your remedy is like the helleboraster, that grew in the woman's garden for the cure of worms in her neighbour's children: for truly it wrought too roughly to give it to any of her own. Methinks your charity, in your present persecution, is much what as prudent, as justifiable, as that good woman's. I hope I have done you no injury, that I here suppose you of the church of England. If I have, I beg your pardon.—It is no offence of malice, I assure you: for I suppose no worse of you than I confess of myself.

Sometimes this punishment that you contend for, is "to bring men to act according to reason and sound judgment."

"Tertius è cœlo cecidit Cato."

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This is reformation indeed. If you can help us to it, you will deserve statues to be erected to you, as to the restorer of decayed religion. But if all men have not reason and sound judgment, will punishment put it into them? Besides, concerning this matter, mankind is so divided, that he acts according to reason and sound judgment at Augsburg, who would be judged to do the quite contrary at Edinburgh. Will punishment make men know what is reason and sound judgment? If it will not, it is impossible it should make them act according to it. Reason and sound judgment are the elixir itself, the universal remedy: and you may as reasonably punish men to bring them to have the philosopher's stone, as to bring them to act according to reason and sound judgment.

Sometimes it is, "To put men upon a serious and impartial examination of the controversy between the magistrate and them, which is the way for them to come to the knowledge of the truth." But what if the truth be on neither side, as I am apt to imagine you will think it is not, where neither the magistrate nor the dissenter is either of them of your church; how will the "examining the controversy between the magistrate and him be the way to come to the knowledge of the truth?" Suppose the controversy between a Lutheran and a papist; or, if you please, between a presbyterian magistrate and a quaker subject.—Will the examining the controversy between the magistrate and the dissenting subject, in this case, bring him to the knowledge of the truth? If you say yes, then you grant one of these to have the truth on his side; for the examining the controversy between a presbyterian and a quaker, leaves the controversy either of them has with the church of England, or any other church, untouched. And so one, at least, of those being already come to the knowledge of the truth, ought not to be put under your discipline of punishment, which is only to bring him to the truth. If you say no, and that the examining the controversy between the magistrate and the dissenter, in this case, will not bring him to the knowledge of the

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truth; you confess your rule to be false, and your method to no purpose.

To conclude, your system is, in short, this: You would have all men, laying aside prejudice, humour, passion, &c. examine the grounds of their religion, and search for the truth. This, I confess, is heartily to be wished. The means that you propose to make men do this, is that dissenters should be punished to make them do so. It is as if you had said, Men generally are guilty of a fault; therefore let one sect, who have the ill luck to be of an opinion different from the magistrate, be punished. This at first sight shocks any who has the least spark of sense, reason, or justice. But having spoken of this already, and concluding that upon second thoughts you yourself will be ashamed of it, let us consider it put so as to be consistent with common sense, and with all the advantage it can bear; and then let us see what you can make of it: "Men are negligent in examining the religions they embrace, refuse, or persist in; therefore it is fit they should be punished to make them do it." This is a consequence, indeed, which may, without defiance to common sense, be drawn from it. This is the use, the only use, which you think punishment can indirectly, and at a distance, have, in matters of religion. You would have men by punishments driven to examine. What? Religion. To what end? To bring them to the knowledge of the truth. But I answer,

1. Every one has not the ability to do this.
2. Every one has not the opportunity to do it.

Would you have every poor protestant, for example, in the Palatinate, examine thoroughly whether the pope be infallible, or head of the church; whether there be a purgatory; whether saints are to be prayed to, or the dead prayed for; whether the Scripture be the only rule of faith; whether there be no salvation out of the church; and whether there be no church without bishops; and an hundred other questions in controversy between the papists and those protestants; and when he had mastered these, go on to fortify himself against the

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opinions and objections of other churches he differs from? This, which is no small task, must be done, before a man can have brought his religion to the bar of reason, and given it a fair trial there. And if you will punish men till this be done, the countryman must leave off ploughing and sowing, and betake himself to the study of Greek and Latin; and the artisan must sell his tools, to buy fathers and schoolmen, and leave his family to starve. If something less than this will satisfy you, pray tell me what is enough. Have they considered and examined enough, if they are satisfied themselves where the truth lies? If this be the limits of their examination, you will find few to punish; unless you will punish them to make them do what they have done already: for, however he came by his religion, there is scarce any one to be found who does not own himself satisfied that he is in the right. Or else, must they be punished to make them consider and examine till they embrace that which you choose for truth? If this be so, what do you but in effect choose for them, when yet you would have men punished, "to bring them to such a care of their souls, that no other person might choose for them?" If it be truth in general, you would have them by punishments driven to seek; that is to offer matter of dispute, and not a rule of discipline; for to punish any one to make him seek till he find truth, without a judge of truth, is to punish for you know not what; and is all one as if you should whip a scholar to make him find out the square root of a number you do not know. I wonder not therefore that you could not resolve with yourself what degree of severity you would have used, nor how long continued; when you dare not speak out directly whom you would have punished, and are far from being clear to what end they should be under penalties.

Consonant to this uncertainty, of whom, or what to be punished, you tell us, "that there is no question of the success of this method. Force will certainly do, if duly proportioned to the design of it."

What, I pray, is the design of it? I challenge you, or any man living, out of what you have said in your

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book, to tell me directly what it is. In all other punishments that ever I heard of yet, till now that you have taught the world a new method, the design of them has been to cure the crime they are denounced against, and so I think it ought to be here. What I beseech you is the crime here? Dissenting? That you say not any where is a fault. Besides you tell us, "that the magistrate hath not authority to compel any one to his religion:" and that you do "not require that men should have no rule but the religion of the country." And the power you ascribe to the magistrate is given him to bring men, "not to his own, but to the true religion." If dissenting be not the fault, is it that a man does not examine his own religion, and the grounds of it? Is that the crime your punishments are designed to cure? Neither that dare you say; lest you displease more than you satisfy with your new discipline. And then again, as I said before, you must tell us how far you would have them examine, before you punish them for not doing it. And I imagine, if that were all we required of you, it would be long enough before you would trouble us with a law that should prescribe to every one how far he was to examine matters of religion; wherein if he failed and came short, he was to be punished; if he performed, and went in his examination to the bounds set by the law, he was acquitted and free. Sir, when you consider it again, you will perhaps think this a case reserved to the great day, when the secrets of all hearts shall be laid open; for I imagine it is beyond the power or judgment of man, in that variety of circumstances, in respect of parts, tempers, opportunities, helps, &c. men are in, in this world, to determine what is every one's duty in this great business of search, inquiry, examination; or to know when any one has done it. That which makes me believe you will be of this mind is, that where you undertake for the success of this method, if rightly used, it is with a limitation, upon such as are not altogether incurable. So that when your remedy is prepared, according to art, which art is yet unknown;

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and rightly applied, and given in a due dose, all which are secrets; it will then infallibly cure. Whom? All that are not incurable by it. And so will a pippin posset, eating fish in Lent, or a presbyterian lecture, certainly cure all that are not incurable by them; for I am sure you do not mean it will cure all, but those who are absolutely incurable; because your yourself allow one means left of cure, when yours will not do, viz. the grace of God. Your words are, "what means is there left (except the grace of God) to reduce them, but lay thorns and briars in their way." And here also, in the place we were considering, you tell us, "the incurable are to be left to God." Whereby, if you mean they are to be left to those means he has ordained for men's conversion and salvation, yours must never be made use of: for he indeed has prescribed preaching and hearing of his word; but as for those who will not hear, I do not find any where that he has commanded they should be compelled or beaten to it.

There is a third thing that you are as tender and reserved in, as either naming the criminals to be punished, or positively telling us the end for which they should be punished: and that is with what sort of penalties, what degree of punishment, they should be forced. You are indeed so gracious to them, that you renounce the severities and penalties hitherto made use of. You tell us, they should be but moderate penalties. But if we ask you what are moderate penalties, you confess you cannot tell us. So that by moderate here you yet mean nothing. You tell us, "the outward force to be applied should be duly tempered." But what that due temper is, you do not or cannot say; and so in effect it signifies just nothing. Yet if in this you are not plain and direct, all the rest of your design will signify nothing; for it being to have some men, and to some end, punished; yet if it cannot be found what punishment is to be used, it is, notwithstanding all you have said, utterly useless. You tell us modestly, that "to determine precisely the just measure of the punishment will require some consideration." If the faults were pre-

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cisely determined, and could be proved, it would require no more consideration to determine the measure of the punishment, in this, than it would in any other case, where those were known. But where the fault is undefined, and the guilt not to be proved, as I suppose it will be found in this present business of examining; it will without doubt require consideration to proportion the force to the design. Just so much consideration as it will require to fit a coat to the moon, or proportion a shoe to the feet of those who inhabit her; for to proportion a punishment to a fault that you do not name, and so we in charity ought to think you do not yet know; and a fault that when you have named it, will be impossible to be proved who are or are not guilty of it; will I suppose require as much consideration, as to fit a shoe to feet whose size and shape are not known.

However, you offer some measures whereby to regulate your punishments; which, when they are looked into, will be found to be just as good as none; they being impossible to be any rule in the case. The first is "so much force, or such penalties as are ordinarily sufficient to prevail with men of common discretion, and not desperately perverse and obstinate, to weigh matters of religion carefully and impartially, and without which ordinarily they will not do this." Where it is to be observed:

1. That who are these men of common discretion is as hard to know, as to know what is a fit degree of punishment in the case; and so you do but regulate one uncertainty by another. Some men will be apt to think, that he who will not weigh matters of religion, which are of infinite concernment to him, without punishment, cannot in reason be thought a man of common discretion. Many women, of common discretion enough to manage the ordinary affairs of their families, are not able to read a page in an ordinary author, or to understand and give an account what it means, when read to them. Many men, of common discretion in their callings, are not able to judge when an argument is conclusive or no; much less to trace it through

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a long train of consequences. What penalties shall be sufficient to prevail with such, who upon examination, I fear, will not be found to make the least part of mankind, to examine and weigh matters of religion carefully and impartially? The law allows all to have common discretion, for whom it has not provided guardians or bedlam; so that, in effect, your men of common discretion are all men, not judged ideots or madmen: and penalties sufficient to prevail with all men of common discretion, are penalties sufficient to prevail with all men, but ideots and madmen. Which what a measure it is to regulate penalties by, let all men of common discretion judge.

2. You may be pleased to consider, that all men of the same degree of discretion are not apt to be moved by the same degree of penalties. Some are of a more yielding, some of a more stiff temper; and what is sufficient to prevail on one, is not half enough to move the other; though both men of common discretion: so that common discretion will be here of no use to determine the measure of punishment: especially when in the same clause you except men desperately perverse and obstinate, who are as hard to be known, as what you seek, viz. the just proportions of punishments necessary to prevail with men to consider, examine, and weigh matters of religion; wherein, if a man tells you he has considered, he has weighed, he has examined, and so goes on in his former course; it is impossible for you ever to know whether he has done his duty, or whether he be desperately perverse and obstinate; so that this exception signifies just nothing.

There are many things, in your use of force and penalties, different from any I ever met with elsewhere.—One of them, this clause of yours concerning the measure of punishments, now under consideration, offers me: wherein you proportion your punishments only to the yielding and corrigible, not to the perverse and obstinate; contrary to the common discretion which has hitherto made laws in other cases, which levels the punishments against refractory offenders, and never spares them because they are obstinate. This, however, I will

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not blame, as an oversight in you. Your new method, which aims at such impracticable and inconsistent things as laws cannot bear, nor penalties be useful to, forced you to it. The uselessness, absurdity, and unreasonableness of great severities, you had acknowledged in the foregoing paragraphs. Dissenters you would have brought to consider by moderate penalties. They lie under them; but whether they have considered or no, (for that you cannot tell) they still continue dissenters. What is to be done now? Why, the incurable are to be left to God, as you tell us, p. 12. Your punishments were not meant to prevail on the desperately perverse and obstinate, as you tell us here; and so whatever be the success, your punishments are however justified.

You have given us in another place something like another boundary to your moderate penalties: but when examined, it proves just like the rest, trifling only, in good words, so put together as to have no direct meaning; an art very much in use amongst some sort of learned men. The words are these: "such penalties as may not tempt persons who have any concern for their eternal salvation, (and those who have none ought not to be considered) to renounce a religion which they believe to be true, or profess one which they do not believe to be so." If by any concern, you mean a true concern for their eternal salvation, by this rule you may make your punishments as great as you please; and all the severities you have disclaimed may be brought in play again: for none of those will be able to make a man, "who is truly concerned for his eternal salvation, renounce a religion he believes to be true, or profess one he does not believe to be so." If by those who have any concern, you mean such who have some faint wishes for happiness hereafter, and would be glad to have things go well with them in the other world, but will venture nothing in this world for it; these the moderatest punishments you can imagine will make change their religion. If by any concern, you mean whatever may be between these two; the degrees are so infinite, that to proportion

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your punishments by that, is to have no measure of them at all.

One thing I cannot but take notice of in this passage, before I leave it: and that is, that you say here, "those who have no concern for their salvation, deserve not to be considered." In other parts of your letter, you pretend to have compassion on the careless, and provide remedies for them: but here, of a sudden, your charity fails you; and you give them up to eternal perdition, without the least regard, the least pity, and say they deserve not to be considered. Our Saviour's rule was, "the sick and not the whole need a physician." Your rule here is, those that are careless, are not to be considered, but are to be left to themselves. This would seem strange, if one did not observe what drew you to it. You perceived that if the magistrate was to use no punishments but such as would make nobody change their religion, he was to use none at all: for the careless would be brought to the national church, with any slight punishments; and when they are once there, you are, it seems, satisfied, and look no farther after them. So that by your own measures, "if the careless, and those who have no concern for their eternal salvation," are to be regarded and taken care of; if the salvation of their souls is to be promoted, there is to be no punishment used at all; and therefore you leave them out, as not to be considered.

There remains yet one thing to be inquired into, concerning the measure of the punishments, and that is the length of their duration. Moderate punishments that are continued, that men find no end of, know no way out of, sit heavy, and become immoderately uneasy. Dissenters you would have punished, to make them consider. Your penalties have had the effect on them you intended; they have made them consider; and they have done their utmost in considering. What now must be done with them? They must be punished on; for they are still dissenters. If it were just, if you had reason at first to punish a dissenter, to make him consider, when you did not know but that he had considered al-

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ready; it is as just, and you have as much reason to punish him on, even when he has performed what your punishments were designed for, when he has considered, but yet remains a dissenter. For I may justly suppose, and you must grant, that a man may remain a dissenter, after all the consideration your moderate penalties can bring him to; when we see greater punishments, even those severities you disown, as too great, are not able to make men consider so far as to be convinced, and brought over to the national church.

If your punishments may not be inflicted on men, to make them consider, who have or may have considered already, for aught you know; then dissenters are never to be once punished, no more than any other sort of men. If dissenters are to be punished, to make them consider, whether they have considered or no; then their punishments, though they do consider, must never cease, as long as they are dissenters; which whether it be to punish them only to bring them to consider, let all men judge. This I am sure; punishments, in your method, must either never begin upon dissenters, or never cease. And so, pretend moderation as you please, the punishments which your method requires must be either very immoderate, or none at all.

And now, you having yielded to our author, and that upon very good reasons which you yourself urge, and which I shall set down in your own words, "that to prosecute men with fire and sword, or to deprive them of their estates, to maim them with corporal punishments, to starve and torture them in noisome prisons, and in the end even to take away their lives, to make them Christians, is but an ill way of expressing men's desire of the salvation of those whom they treat in this manner. And that it will be very difficult to persuade men of sense, that he who with dry eyes and satisfaction of mind can deliver his brother to the executioner, to be burnt alive, does sincerely and heartily concern himself to save that brother from the flames of hell in the world to come. And that these methods are so very improper, in respect to the design of them, that they usually produce the quite contrary effect. For

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whereas all the use which force can have for the advancing true religion, and the salvation of souls, is (as has already been showed) by disposing men to submit to instruction, and to give a fair hearing to the reasons which are offered, for the enlightening their minds, and discovering the truth to them; these cruelties have the misfortune to be commonly looked upon as so just a prejudice against any religion that uses them, as makes it needless to look any farther into it; and to tempt men to reject it, as both false and detestable, without ever vouchsafing to consider the rational grounds and motives of it. This effect they seldom fail to work upon the sufferers of them; and as to the spectators, if they be not beforehand well instructed in those grounds and motives, they will be much tempted likewise, not only to entertain the same opinion of such a religion, but withal to judge much more favourably of that of the sufferers; who, they will be apt to think, would not expose themselves to such extremities, which they might avoid by compliance, if they were not thoroughly satisfied of the justice of their cause." And upon these reasons you conclude, "that these severities are utterly unapt and improper for the bringing men to embrace that truth which must save them." Again, you having acknowledged, that the authority of the magistrate is not an authority to compel any one to his religion." And again, "that the rigour of laws and force of penalties are not capable to convince and change men's minds." And yet farther, "that you do not require that men should have no rule but the religion of the court; or that they should be put under a necessity to quit the light of their own reason, and oppose the dictates of their own consciences, and blindly resign up themselves to the will of their governors; but that the power you ascribe to the magistrate, is given him to bring men not to his own, but to the true religion." Now you having, I say, granted this, whereby you directly condemn and abolish all laws that have been made here, or any where else, that ever I heard of, to compel men to conformity; I think the author, and who soever else are most for liberty of conscience,

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might be content with the toleration you allow, by condemning the laws about religion, now in force; and are testified, until you had made your new method consistent and practicable, by telling the world plainly and directly,

1. Who are to be punished.
2. For what.
3. With what punishments.
4. How long.
5. What advantage to true religion it would be, if magistrates every where did so punish.
6. And lastly, whence the magistrate had commission to do so.

When you have done this plainly and intelligibly, without keeping in the uncertainty of general expressions, and without supposing all along your church in the right, and your religion the true; which can no more be allowed to you in this case, whatever your church or religion be, than it can be to a papist or a Lutheran, a presbyterian or anana baptist; nay, no more to you, than it can be allowed to a Jew or a Mahometan; when, I say, you have, by settling these points, framed the parts of your new engine, set it together, and showed that it will work, without doing more harm than good in the world; I think then men may be content to submit to it. But imagining this, and an engine to show the perpetual motion, will be found out together, I think toleration in a very good state, notwithstanding your answer; wherein you have said so much for it, and for aught I see nothing against it; unless an impracticable chimera be, in your opinion, something mightily to be apprehended.

We have now seen and examined the main of your treatise; and therefore I think I might here end, without going any farther. But, that you may not think yourself, or any of your arguments neglected, I will go over the remainder, and give you my thoughts on every thing I shall meet with in it, that seems to need any answer. In one place you argue against the author thus: "if then the author's fourth proposition," as you

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call it, viz. That force is of no use for promoting true religion and the salvation of souls, "be not true (as perhaps by this time it appears it is not) then the last proposition, which is built upon it, must fall with it:" which last proposition is this, viz. "that nobody can have any right to use any outward force or compulsion to bring men to the true religion, and so to salvation." If this proposition were built, as you allege, upon that which you call his fourth, then indeed if the fourth fell, this built upon it would fall with it. But that not being the author's proposition, as I have showed, nor this built wholly on it, but on other reasons, as I have already proved, and any one may see in several parts of his letter, particularly p. 50, 51, what you allege falls of itself.

The business of the next paragraph is to prove, That if "force be useful, then somebody must certainly have a right to use it." The first argument you go about to prove it by is this, "That usefulness is as good an argument to prove there is somewhere a right to use it, as uselessness is to prove nobody has such a right." If you consider the things of whose usefulness or uselessness we are speaking, you will perhaps be of another mind. It is punishment, or force used in punishing. Now all punishment is some evil, some inconvenience, some suffering; by taking away or abridging some good thing, which he who is punished has otherwise a right to. Now to justify the bringing any such evil upon any man, two things are requisite. First, That he who does it has commission and power so to do. Secondly, That it be directly useful for the procuring some greater good. Whatever punishment one man uses to another, without these two conditions, whatever he may pretend, proves an injury and injustice, and so of right ought to have been let alone. And therefore, though usefulness, which is one of the conditions that makes punishments just, when it is away, may hinder punishments from being lawful in any body's hands; yet usefulness, when present, being but one of those conditions, cannot give the other, which is a commission to punish; without

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which also punishment is unlawful. From whence it follows, That though useless punishment be unlawful from any hand, yet useful punishment from every hand is not lawful. A man may have the stone, and it may be useful, more than indirectly, and at a distance useful, to him to be cut; but yet this usefulness will not justify the most skilful surgeon in the world, by force to make him endure the pain and hazard of cutting; because he has no commission, no right, without the patient's own consent, to do so. Nor is it a good argument, cutting will be useful to him, therefore there is a right somewhere to cut him, whether he will or no. Much less will there be an argument for any right, if there be only a possibility that it may prove useful indirectly and by accident.

Your other argument is this: If force or punishment be of necessary use, "then it must be acknowledged, that there is a right somewhere to use it; unless we will say (what without impiety cannot be said) that the wise and benign Disposer and Governor of all things has not furnished mankind with competent means for the promoting his own honour in the world, and the good of souls." If your way of arguing be true, it is demonstration, that force is not of necessary use. For I argue thus, in your form: We must acknowledge force not to be of necessary use; "unless we will say (what without impiety cannot be said) that the wise Disposer and Governor of all things did not, for above three hundred years after Christ, furnish his church with competent means for promoting his own honour in the world, and the good of souls." It is for you to consider whether these arguments be conclusive or no. This I am sure, the one is as conclusive as the other. But if your supposed usefulness places a right somewhere to use it, pray tell me in whose hands it places it in Turkey, Persia, or China, or any country where Christians of different churches live under a heathen or Mahometan sovereign? And if you cannot tell me in whose hands it places it there, as I believe you will find it pretty hard to do; there are then, it seems, some places where, upon your supposition of the neces-

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sary usefulness of force, "the wise and benign Governor and Disposer of all things has not furnished men with competent means for promoting his own honour and the good of souls;" unless you will grant, that the "wise and benign Disposer and Governor of all things hath, for the promoting of his honour and the good of souls, placed a power in Mahometan or heathen princes to punish Christians, to bring them to consider reasons and arguments proper to convince them." But this is the advantage of so fine an invention, as that of force doing some service indirectly and at a distance; which usefulness, if we may believe you, places a right in Mahometan or pagan princes' hands, to use force upon Christians; for fear lest mankind in those countries should be unfurnished with means for the promoting God's honour and the good of souls. For thus you argue: "if there be so great use of force, then there is a right somewhere to use it. And if there be such a right somewhere, where should it be but in the civil sovereign?" Who can deny now, but that you have taken care, great care, for the promoting of truth and the Christian religion? But yet it is as hard for me, I confess, and I believe for others, to conceive how you should think to do any service to truth and the Christian religion, by putting a right into Mahometans' or heathens' hands to punish Christians; as it was for you to conceive how the author should think "to do any service to the truth, and the Christian religion," by exempting the professors of it from punishment every where, since there are more pagan, Mahometan, and erroneous princes in the world, than orthodox; truth, and the Christian religion, taking the world as we find it, is sure to be more punished and suppressed, than error and falsehood.

The author having endeavoured to show that nobody at all, of any rank or condition, had a power to punish, torment, or use any man ill, for matters of religion; you tell us "you do not yet understand, why clergymen are not as capable of such power as other men." I do not remember that the author any where, by excepting ecclesiastics more than others, gave you any

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occasion to show your concern in this point. Had he foreseen that this would have touched you so nearly, and that you set your heart so much upon the clergy's power of punishing; it is like he would have told you, he thought ecclesiastics as capable of it as any men; and that if forwardness and diligence in the exercise of such power may recommend any to it, clergymen in the opinion of the world stand fairest for it. However, you do well to put in your claim for them, though the author excludes them no more than their neighbours. Nay, they must be allowed the pretence of the fairest title. For I never read of any severities that were to bring men to Christ, but those of the law of Moses; which is therefore called a pedagogue, (Gal. iii. 24.) And the next verse tells us, that "after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster." But yet if we are still to be driven to Christ by a rod, I shall not envy them the pleasure of wielding it: only I desire them, when they have got the scourge into their hands, to remember our Saviour, and follow his example, who never used it but once; and that they would, like him, employ it only to drive vile and scandalous traffickers for the things of this world out of their church, rather than to drive whoever they can into it. Whether the latter be not a proper method to make their church what our Saviour there pronounced of the temple, they who use it were best look. For, in matters of religion, none are so easy to be driven as those who have nothing of religion at all; and next to them, the vicious, the ignorant, the worldling, and the hypocrite; who care for no more of religion but the name, nor no more of any church but its prosperity and power; and who, not unlike those described by our Saviour, (Luke xx. 47) for a show come to, or cry up the prayers of the church, "that they may devour widows, and other helpless people's houses." I say not this of the serious professors of any church, who are in earnest in matters of religion. Such I value, who conscientiously, and out of a sincere persuasion, embrace any religion, though different from mine, and in a way I think mistaken. But nobody can have reason to think otherwise than what

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I have said, of those who are wrought upon to be of any church by secular hopes and fears. Those truly place trade above all other considerations, and merchandize with religion itself, who regulate their choice by worldly profit and loss.

You endeavour to prove, against the author, that civil society is not instituted only for civil ends, *i. e.* the procuring, preserving, and advancing men's civil interests: your words are: "I must say that our author does but beg the question, when he affirms that the commonwealth is constituted only for the procuring, preserving, and advancing of the civil interests of the members of it. That commonwealths are instituted for these ends, no man will deny. But if there be any other ends besides these, attainable by the civil society and government, there is no reason to affirm, that these are the only ends for which they are designed. Doubtless commonwealths are instituted for the attaining of all the benefits which political government can yield. And therefore, if the spiritual and eternal interests of men may any way be procured or advanced by political government, the procuring and advancing those interests must in all reason be reckoned among the ends of civil societies, and so, consequently, fall within the compass of the magistrate's jurisdiction." I have set down your words at large, to let the reader see, that you of all men had the least reason to tell the author, he does but beg the question; unless you mean to justify yourself by the pretence of his example. You argue thus: "If there be any other ends attainable by civil society, then civil interests are not the only ends for which commonwealths are instituted." And how do you prove there be other ends? Why thus: "Doubtless commonwealths are instituted for the attaining of all the benefits which political government can yield." Which is as clear a demonstration, as doubtless can make it to be. The question is, whether civil society be instituted only for civil ends? You say, no; and your proof is, because doubtless it is instituted for other ends. If I now say, doubtless this is a good argument;

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is not every one bound without more ado to admit it for such? If not, doubtless you are in danger to be thought to beg the question.

But notwithstanding you say here, that the author begs the question; in the following page you tell us, "That the author offers three considerations which seem to him abundantly to demonstrate, that the civil power neither can, nor aught, in any manner to be extended to the salvation of souls." He does not then beg the question. For the question being, "Whether civil interest be the only end of civil society," he gives this reason for the negative, "That civil power has nothing to do with the salvation of souls;" and offers three considerations for the proof of it. For it will always be a good consequence, that, if the civil power has nothing to do with the salvation of souls, "then civil interest is the only end of civil society." And the reason of it is plain; because a man having no other interest, but either in this world or the world to come; if the end of civil society reach not to a man's interest in the other world, all which is comprehended in the salvation of his soul, it is plain that the sole end of civil society is civil interest, under which the author comprehends the good things of this world.

And now let us examine the truth of your main position, viz. "That civil society is instituted for the attaining all the benefits that it may any way yield." Which, if true, then this position must be true, viz. "That all societies whatsoever are instituted for the attaining all the benefits that they may any way yield;" there being nothing peculiar to civil society in the case, why that society should be instituted for the attaining all the benefits it can any way yield, and other societies not. By which argument it will follow, that all societies are instituted for one and the same end: *i. e.* "for the attaining all the benefits that they can any way yield." By which account there will be no difference between church and state; a commonwealth and an army; or between a family, and the East India Company; all which have hitherto been thought distinct sorts of societies, instituted for different ends. If your

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hypothesis hold good, one of the ends of the family must be to preach the Gospel, and administer the sacraments; and one business of an army to teach languages, and propagate religion; because these are benefits some way or other attainable by those societies: unless you take want of commission and authority to be a sufficient impediment: and that will be so too in other cases.

It is a benefit to have true knowledge and philosophy embraced and assented to, in any civil society or government. But will you say, therefore, that it is a benefit to the society, or one of the ends of government, that all who are not peripatetics should be punished, to make men find out the truth, and profess it. This indeed might be thought a fit way to make some men embrace the peripatetic philosophy, but not a proper way to find the truth. For perhaps the peripatetic philosophy may not be true; perhaps a great many may have not time nor parts to study it; perhaps a great many who have studied it, cannot be convinced of the truth of it: and therefore it cannot be a benefit to the commonwealth, nor one of the ends of it, that these members of the society should be disturbed and diseased to no purpose, when they are guilty of no fault. For just the same reason, it cannot be a benefit to civil society, that men should be punished in Denmark, for not being Lutherans; in Geneva, for not being Calvinists; and in Vienna, fornot being papists; as a means to make them find out the true religion. For so, upon your grounds, men must be treated in those places, as well as in England, for not being of the church of England. And then I beseech you, consider the great benefit will accrue to men in society by this method; and I suppose it will be a hard thing for you to prove, that ever civil governments were instituted to punish men for not being of this or that sect in religion; however by accident, indirectly and at a distance, it may be an occasion to one perhaps of a thousand, or an hundred, to study that controversy, which is all you expect from it. If it be a benefit, pray tell me what benefit it is. A civil benefit it cannot be. For men's civil interests are disturbed, injured, and impaired by it.

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And what spiritual benefit that can be to any multitude of men, to be punished for dissenting from a false or erroneous profession, I would have you find out: unless it be a spiritual benefit to be in danger to be driven into a wrong way. For if in all differing sects, all but one is in the wrong, it is a hundred to one but that from which one dissents, and is punished for dissenting from, is the wrong.

I grant it is past doubt, that the nature of man is so covetous of good, that no one would have excluded from any action he does, or from any institution he is concerned in, any manner of good or benefit that it might any way yield. And if this be your meaning, it will not be denied you. But then you speak very improperly, or rather very mistakenly, if you call such benefits as may any way, *i. e.* indirectly, and at a distance, or by accident, be attained by civil or any other society, the ends for which it is instituted. Nothing can "in reason be reckoned amongst the ends of any society," but what may in reason be supposed to be designed by those who enter into it. Now nobody can in reason suppose, that any one entered into civil society for the procuring, securing, or advancing the salvation of his soul; when he, for that end, needed not the force of civil society. "The procuring, therefore, securing, and advancing the spiritual and eternal interest of men, cannot in reason be reckoned amongst the ends of civil societies;" though perhaps it might so fall out, that in some particular instance, some man's spiritual interest might be advanced by your or any other way of applying civil force. A nobleman, whose chapel is decayed or fallen, may make use of his dining-room for praying and preaching. Yet whatever benefit were attainable by this use of the room, nobody can in reason reckon this among the ends for which it was built; no more than the accidental breeding of some bird in any part of it, though it were a benefit it yielded, could in reason be reckoned among the ends of building the house.

But, say you, "doubtless commonwealths are instituted for the attaining of all the benefits which political

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government can yield; and therefore if the spiritual and eternal interests of men may any way be procured or advanced by political government, the procuring and advancing those interests, must in all reason be reckoned amongst the ends of civil society, and so consequently fall within the compass of the magistrate's jurisdiction." Upon the same grounds, I thus reason: Doubtless churches are instituted for the attaining of all the benefits which ecclesiastical government can yield: and therefore, if the temporal and secular interests of men may any way be procured or advanced by ecclesiastical polity, the procuring and advancing those interests must in all reason be reckoned among the ends of religious societies, and so consequently fall within the compass of churchmen's jurisdiction. The church of Rome has openly made its advantage of "secular interests to be procured or advanced, indirectly, and at a distance, and *in ordine ad spiritualia;*" all which ways, if I mistake not English, are comprehended under your "any way." But I do not remember that any of the reformed churches have hitherto directly professed it. But there is a time for all things. And if the commonwealth once invades the spiritual ends of the church, by meddling with the salvation of souls, which she has always been so tender of, who can deny that the church should have liberty to make herself some amends by reprisals?

But, sir, however you and I may argue from wrong suppositions, yet unless the apostle, Eph. iv. where he reckons up the church-officers which Christ hath instituted in his church, had told us they were for some other ends than "for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ;" the advancing of their secular interests will scarce be allowed to be their business, or within the compass of their jurisdiction. Nor till it can be shown that civil society is instituted for spiritual ends, or that the magistrate has commission to interpose his authority, or use force in matters of religion; your supposition "of spiritual benefits indirectly and at a distance attainable" by political government, will never

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prove the advancing of those interests by force to be the magistrate's business, "and to fall within the compass of his jurisdiction." And till then the force of the arguments which the author has brought against it, in the 12th and following pages of his letter, will hold good.

Commonwealths, or civil societies and governments, if you will believe the judicious Mr. Hooker, are, as St. Peter calls them, (1 Pet. ii. 13) ἀνθρωπίνη κτίσις, the contrivance and institution of man; and he shows there for what end; viz. "for the punishment of evil-doers, and the praise of them that do well." I do not find any where, that it is for the punishment of those who are not in church-communion with the magistrate, to make them study controversies in religion, or hearken to those who will tell them "they have mistaken their way, and offer to show them the right one." You must show them such a commission, if you say it is from God. And in all societies instituted by man, the ends of them can be no other than what the institutors appointed; which I am sure could not be their spiritual and eternal interest. For they could not stipulate about these one with another, nor submit this interest to the power of the society, or any sovereign they should set over it. There are nations in the West Indies, which have no other end of their society but their mutual defence against their common enemies. In these, their captain, or prince, is sovereign-commander in time of war; but in time of peace, neither he nor any body else has any authority over any of the society. You cannot deny but other, even temporal ends, are attainable by these commonwealths, if they had been otherwise instituted and appointed to these ends. But all your saying, "doubtless commonwealths are instituted for the attaining of all the benefits which they can yield," will not give authority to any one or more, in such a society, by political government or force, to procure directly or indirectly other benefits than that for which it was instituted: and therefore there it falls not within the compass of those princes' jurisdiction to punish any one of the society for injuring another; because he has

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no commission so to do; whatever reason you may think there is, that that should be reckoned amongst the ends of their society.

But to conclude: your argument has that defect in it which turns it upon yourself. And that is, that the procuring and advancing the spiritual and eternal interests of souls, your way, is not a benefit to the society: and so upon your own supposition, "the procuring and advancing the spiritual interest of souls, any way, cannot be one of the ends of civil society;" unless the procuring and advancing the spiritual interest of souls, in a way proper to do more harm than good towards the salvation of souls, be to be accounted such a benefit as to be one of the ends of civil societies. For that yours is such a way, I have proved already. So that were it hard to prove that political government, whose only instrument is force, could no way by force, however applied, more advance than hinder the spiritual and eternal interest of men; yet having proved it against your particular new way of applying force, I have sufficiently vindicated the author's doctrine from any thing you have said against it. Which is enough for my present purpose.

Your next page tells us, that this reasoning of the author, viz. "that the power of the magistrate cannot be extended to the salvation of souls, because the care of souls is not committed to the magistrate, is proving the thing by itself." As if you should say, when I tell you that you could not extend your power to meddle with the money of a young gentleman you travelled with as tutor, because the care of his money was not committed to you, were proving the thing by itself. For it is not necessary that you should have the power of his money; it may be intrusted to a steward who travels with him; or it may be left to himself. If you have it, it is but a delegated power. And, in all delegated powers, I thought this a fair proof: you have it not, or cannot use it, which is what the author means here by extended to, because it is not committed to you. In the summing up of this argument, (p. 20) the author says, "nobody therefore, in fine, neither com-

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monwealths, &c. hath any title to invade the civil rights and worldly goods of another, upon pretence of religion." Which is an exposition of what he means in the beginning of the argument, by "the magistrate's power cannot be extended to the salvation of souls." So that if we take these last cited words equivalent to those in the former place, his proof will stand thus, "the magistrate has no title to invade the civil rights or worldly goods of any one upon pretence of religion; because the care of souls is not committed to him." This is the same in the author's sense with the former. And whether either this, or that, be a proving the same thing by itself, we must leave to others to judge.

You quote the author's argument, which he brings to prove that the care of souls is not committed to the magistrate in these words; "it is not committed to him by God, because it appears not that God has ever given any such authority to one man over another, as to compel any one to his religion." This, when first I read it, I confess I thought a good argument. But you say, "this is quite beside the business;" and the reason you give is, "for the authority of the magistrate is not an authority to compel any to his religion, but only an authority to procure all his subjects the means of discovering the way of salvation, and to procure withal, as much as in him lies, that none remain ignorant of it," &c. I fear, sir, you forget yoursef. The author was not writing against your new hypothesis before it was known in the world. He may be excused if he had not the gift of prophecy, to argue against a notion which was not yet started. He had in view only the laws hitherto made, and the punishments in matters of religion in use in the world. The penalties, as I take it, are lain on men for being of different ways of religion. Which, what is it other, but to compel them to relinquish their own, and to conform themselves to that from which they differ? If this be not to compel them to the magistrate's religion, pray tell us what is? This must be necessarily so understood; unless it can be supposed that the law intends

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not to have that done, which with penalties it commands to be done; or that punishments are not compulsion, not that compulsion the author complains of. The law says, "do this and live;" embrace this doctrine, conform to this way of worship, and be at ease, and free; or else be fined, imprisoned, banished, burned. If you can show among the laws that have been made in England concerning religion, and I think I may say any where else, any one that punishes men "for not having impartially examined the religion they have embraced or refused," I think I may yield you the cause. Law-makers have been generally wiser than to make laws that could not be executed: and therefore their laws were against non-conformists, which could be known; and not for impartial examination, which could not. It was not then besides the author's business to bring an argument against the persecutions here in fashion. He did not know that any one, who was so free as to acknowledge that "the magistrate has not authority to compel any one to his religion," and thereby at once, as you have done, give up all the laws now in force against dissenters, had yet rods in store for them, and by a new trick would bring them under the lash of the law, when the old pretences were too much exploded to serve any longer. Have you never heard of such a thing as the religion established by law? Which is, it seems, the lawful religion of a country, and to be complied with as such. There being such things, such notions yet in the world, it was not quite besides the author's business to allege, that "God never gave such authority to one man over another, as to compel any one to his religion." I will grant, if you please, "religion established by law" is a pretty odd way of speaking in the mouth of a Christian; and yet it is much in fashion: as if the magistrate's authority could add any force or sanction to any religion, whether true or false. I am glad to find you have so far considered the magistrate's authority, that you agree with the author, that "he hath none to compel men to his religion." Much less can he, by any establish-

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ment of law, add any thing to the truth or validity of his own, or any religion whatsoever.

It remains now to examine whether the author's argument will not hold good, even against punishments in your way; "for if the magistrate's authority be, as you here say, only to procure all his subjects, (mark what you say, *all his subjects*) the means of discovering the way of salvation, and to procure withal, as much as in him lies, that *none* remain ignorant of it, or refuse to embrace it, either for want of using those means, or by reason of any such prejudices as may render them ineffectual." If this be the magistrate's business, in reference to *all his subjects*, I desire you, or any man else, to tell me how this can be done by the application of force only to a part of them; unless you will still vainly suppose ignorance, negligence, or prejudice, only amongst that part which any where differs from the magistrate. If those of the magistrate's church may be ignorant of the way of salvation; if it be possible there may be amongst them those "who refuse to embrace it, either for want of using those means, or by reason of any such prejudices as may render them ineffectual:" what, in this case, becomes of the magistrate's authority to procure all his subjects the means of discovering the way of salvation? Must these of his subjects be neglected, and left without the means he has authority to procure them? Or must he use force upon them too? And then, pray, show me how this can be done. Shall the magistrate punish those of his own religion, "to procure them the means of discovering the way of salvation, and to procure, as much as in him lies, that they remain not ignorant of it, or refuse not to embrace it?" These are such contradictions in practice, this is such condemnation of a man's own religion, as no one can expect from the magistrate; and I dare say you desire not of him. And yet this is that he must do, "if his authority be to procure all his subjects the means of discovering the way to salvation." And if it be so needful, as you say it is, that he should use it, I am sure force can-

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not do that till it be applied wider, and punishment be laid upon more than you would have it; for "if the magistrate be by force to procure, as much as in him lies, that none remain ignorant of the way of salvation;" must he not punish all those who are ignorant of the way of salvation? And pray tell me how this is any way practicable, but by supposing none in the national church ignorant, and all out of it ignorant of the way of salvation. Which, what is it, but to punish men barely for not being of the magistrate's religion; the very thing you deny he has authority to do? So that the magistrate having, by your own confession, no authority thus to use force; and it being otherwise impracticable "for the procuring all his subjects the means of discovering the way of salvation;" there is an end of force. And so force being laid aside, either as unlawful, or impracticable, the author's argument holds good against force, even in your way of applying it.

But if you say, as you do in the foregoing page, that the magistrate has authority "to lay such penalties upon those who refuse to embrace the doctrine of the proper ministers of religion, and to submit to their spiritual government, as to make them bethink themselves so as not to be alienated from the truth: (for, as for foolish humour, and uncharitable prejudice," &c. which are but words of course that opposite parties give one another, as marks of dislike and presumption, I omit them, as signifying nothing to the question; being such as will with the same reason be retorted by the other side); against that also the author's argument holds, that the magistrate has no such authority. 1. Because God never gave the magistrate an authority to be judge of truth for another man in matters of religion: and so he cannot be judge whether any man be alienated from the truth or no. 2. Because the magistrate had never authority given him "to lay any penalties on those who refuse to embrace the doctrine of the proper ministers of his religion, or of any other, or to submit to their spiritual government," more than on any other men.

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To the author's argument, that the magistrate cannot receive such authority from the people; because no man has power to leave it to the choice of any other man to choose a religion for him; you give this pleasant answer: "As the power of the magistrate, in reference to religion, is ordained for the bringing men to take such care as they ought of their salvation, that they may not blindly leave it to the choice, neither of any other person, nor yet of their own lusts and passions, to prescribe to them what faith or worship they shall embrace: so if we suppose this power to be vested in the magistrate by the consent of the people; this will not import their abandoning the care of their salvation, but rather the contrary. For if men, in choosing their religion, are so generally subject, as has been showed, when left wholly to themselves, to be so much swayed by prejudice and passion, as either not at all, or not sufficient to regard the reasons and motives which ought alone to determine their choice; then it is every man's true interest, not to be left wholly to himself in this matter; but that care should be taken, that, in an affair of so vast concernment to him, he may be brought, even against his own inclination, if it cannot be done otherwise, (which is ordinarily the case) to act according to reason and sound judgment. And then what better course can men take to provide for this, than by vesting the power I have described in him who bears the sword?"—Wherein I beseech you consider, 1. Whether it be not pleasant, that you say—"the power of the magistrate is ordained to bring men to take such care;" and thence infer, "Then it is every one's interest to vest such power in the magistrate?" For if it be the power of the magistrate, it is his. And what need the people vest it in him, unless there be need, and it be the best course they can take, to vest a power in the magistrate, which he has already? 2. Another pleasant thing you here say is, "That the power of the magistrate is to bring men to such a care of their salvation, that they may not blindly leave it to the choice of any person, or their

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own lusts, or passions, to prescribe to them what faith or worship they shall embrace; and yet that it is their best course to vest a power in the magistrate," liable to the same lusts and passions as themselves, to choose for them. For if they vest a power in the magistrate to punish them, when they dissent from his religion; "to bring them to act, even against their own inclination, according to their reason and sound judgment;" which is, as you explain yourself in another place, to bring them to consider reasons and arguments proper and sufficient to convince them: how far is this from leaving it to the choice of another man to prescribe to them what faith or worship they shall embrace? Especially if we consider that you think it a strange thing, that the author would have the care of every man's soul left to himself alone. So that this care being vested "in the magistrate with a power to punish men to make them consider reasons and arguments proper and sufficient to convince them" of the truth of his religion; the choice is evidently in the magistrate, as much as it can be in the power of one man to choose for another what religion he shall be of; which consists only in a power of compelling him by punishments to embrace it.

I do neither you nor the magistrate injury, when I say that the power you give the magistrate of "punishing men, to make them consider reasons and arguments proper and sufficient to convince them," is to convince them of the truth of his religion, and to bring them to it. For men will never, in his opinion, "act according to reason and sound judgment," which is the thing you here say men should be brought to by the magistrate, even against their "own inclination," till they embrace his religion. And if you have the brow of an honest man, you will not say the magistrate will ever punish you "to bring you to consider any other reasons and arguments, but such as are proper to convince you" of the truth of his religion, and to bring you to that. Thus you shift forwards and backwards. You say "the magistrate has no power to punish men, to compel them to his religion," but only

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to "compel them to consider reasons and arguments proper to convince them" of the truth of his religion, which is all one as to say, nobody has power to choose your way for you to Jerusalem; but yet the lord of the manor has power to punish you, "to bring you to consider reasons and arguments proper and sufficient to convince you." Of what? That the way he goes in is the right, and so to make you join in company, and go along with him. So that, in effect, what is all your going about, but to come at last to the same place again; and put a power into the magistrate's hands, under another pretence, to compel men to his religion? which use of force the author has sufficiently overthrown, and you yourself have quitted. But I am tired to follow you so often round the same circle.

You speak of it here as the most deplorable condition imaginable, that "men should be left to themselves, and not be forced to consider and examine the grounds of their religion, and search impartially and diligently after the truth." This you make the great miscarriage of mankind. And for this you seem solicitous, all through your treatise, to find out a remedy; and there is scarce a leaf wherein you do not offer yours. But what if, after all now, you should be found to prevaricate? "Men have contrived to themselves," say you, "a great variety of religions:" it is granted. "They seek not the truth in this matter with that application of mind, and that freedom of judgment which is requisite:" it is confessed. "All the false religions now on foot in the world have taken their rise from the slight and partial consideration, which men have contented themselves with, in searching after the true; and men take them up, and persist in them, for want of due examination:" be it so. "There is need of a remedy for this, and I have found one whose success cannot be questioned:" very well. What is it? Let us hear it. "Why, dissenters must be punished." Can any body that hears you say so, believe you in earnest; and that want of examination is the thing you would have amended, when want of

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examination is not the thing you would have punished? If want of examination be the fault, want of examination must be punished; if you are, as you pretend, fully satisfied, that punishment is the proper and only means to remedy it. But if, in all your treatise, you can show me one place, where you say that the ignorant, the careless, the inconsiderate, the negligent in examining thoroughly the truth of their own and others' religion, &c. are to be punished; I will allow your remedy for a good one. But you have not said any thing like this: and which is more, I tell you beforehand, you dare not say it. And whilst you do not, the world has reason to judge, that however want of examination be a general fault, which you with great vehemency have exaggerated; yet you use it only for a pretence to punish dissenters; and either distrust your remedy, that it will not cure this evil, or else care not to have it generally cured. This evidently appears from your whole management of the argument. And he that reads your treatise with attention will be more confirmed in this opinion, when he shall find that you, who are so earnest to have men punished to bring them to consider and examine, that so they may discover the way to salvation, have not said one word of considering, searching, and hearkening to the Scripture; which had been as good a rule for a Christian to have sent them to, "as to reasons and arguments proper to convince them" of you know not what; "as to the instruction and government of the proper ministers of religion," which who they are, men are yet far from being agreed; "or as to the information of those, who tell them they have mistaken their way, and offer to show them the right; and to the like uncertain and dangerous guides; which were not those that our Saviour and the apostles sent men to, but to the Scriptures." "Search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life," says our Saviour to the unbelieving persecuting Jews, (John v. 39); and it is the Scriptures which, St. Paul says, "are able to make wise unto salvation," (2 Tim. iii. 15.)

Talk no more, therefore, if you have any care of

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your reputation, how much "it is every man's interest not to be left to himself, without molestation, without punishment in matters of religion." Talk not of "bringing men to embrace the truth that must save them, by putting them upon examination." Talk no more "of force and punishment, as the only way left to bring men to examine." It is evident you mean nothing less. For, though want of examination be the only fault you complain of, and punishment be in your opinion the only way to bring men to it; and this the whole design of your book; yet you have not once proposed in it, that those, who do not impartially examine, should be forced to it. And that you may not think I talk at random, when I say you dare not; I will, if you please, give you some reasons for my saying so.

1. Because, if you propose that all should be punished, who are ignorant, who have not used "such consideration as is apt and proper to manifest the truth; but to have been determined in the choice of their religion by impressions of education, admiration of persons, worldly respects, prejudices, and the like incompetent motives; and have taken up their religion, without examining it as they ought;" you will propose to have several of your own church, be it what it will, punished; which would be a proposition too apt to offend too many of it, for you to venture on. For whatever need there be of reformation, every one will not thank you for proposing such an one as must begin at, or at least reach to, the house of God.

2. Because, if you should propose that all those who are ignorant, careless, and negligent in examining, should be punished, you would have little to say in this question of toleration. For if the laws of the state were made, as they ought to be, equal to all the subjects, without distinction of men of different professions in religion; and the faults to be amended by punishments were impartially punished, in all who are guilty of them; this would immediately produce a perfect toleration, or show the uselessness of force in matters of

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religion. If therefore you think it so necessary, as you say, for the "promoting of true religion, and the salvation of souls, that men should be punished to make them examine;" do but find a way to apply force to all that have not thoroughly and impartially examined, and you have my consent. For though force be not the proper means of promoting religion; yet there is no better way to show the uselessness of it, than the applying it equally to miscarriages, in whomsoever found; and not to distinct parties or persuasions of men, for the reformation of them alone, when others are equally faulty.

3. Because, without being for as large a toleration as the author proposes, you cannot be truly and sincerely for a free and impartial examination. For whoever examines, must have the liberty to judge, and follow his judgment; or else you put him upon examination to no purpose. And whether that will not as well lead men from, as to your church, is so much a venture, that, by your way of writing, it is evident enough you are loth to hazard it; and if you are of the national church, it is plain your brethren will not bear with you in the allowance of such a liberty. You must therefore either change your method; and if the want of examination be that great and dangerous fault you would have corrected, you must equally punish all that are equally guilty of any neglect in this matter, and then take your only means, your beloved force, and make the best of it; or else you must put off your mask, and confess that you design not your punishments to bring men to examination, but to conformity. For the fallacy you have used is too gross to pass upon this age.

What follows to p. 26, I think I have considered sufficiently already. But there you have found out something worth notice. In this page, out of abundant kindness, when the dissenters have their heads, without any cause, broken, you provide them a plaster. For, say you, "if upon such examination of the matter," (*i. e.* brought to it by the magistrate's punishment) "they chance to find, that the truth does not lie on the magistrate's side; they have gained thus much how-

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ever, even by the magistrate's misapplying his power, that they know better than they did before, where the truth does lie." Which is as true as if you should say, upon examination I find such a one is out of the way to York; therefore I know better than I did before, that I am in the right. For neither of you may be in the right. This were true indeed, if there were but two ways in all; a right and a wrong. But where there be an hundred ways, and but one right; your knowing upon examination, that that which I take is wrong, makes you not know any thing better than before that yours is the right. But if that be the best reason you have for it, it is ninety-eight to one still against you, that you are in the wrong. Besides, he that has been punished may have examined before, and then you are sure he gains nothing. However, you think you do well to encourage the magistrate in punishing, and comfort the man who has suffered unjustly by showing what he shall gain by it. Whereas, on the contrary, in a discourse of this nature, where the bounds of right and wrong are inquired into, and should be established, the magistrate was to be showed the bounds of his authority, and warned of the injury he did when he misapplies his power, and punished any man who deserved it not; and not be soothed into injustice, by consideration of gain that might thence accrue to the sufferer. "Shall we do evil that good may come of it?" There are a sort of people who are very wary of touching upon the magistrate's duty, and tender of showing the bounds of his power, and the injustice and ill consequences of his misapplying it; at least, so long as it is misapplied in favour of them, and their party. I know not whether you are of their number. But this I am sure, you have the misfortune here to fall into their mistake. The magistrate, you confess, may in this case misapply his power; and instead of representing to him the injustice of it, and the account he must give to his sovereign, one day, of this great trust put into his hands, for the equal protection of all his subjects: you pretend advantages which the sufferer may receive from it: and

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so, instead of disheartening from, you give encouragement to, the mischief: which, upon your principle, joined to the natural thirst in man after arbitrary power, may be carried to all manner of exorbitancy, with some pretence of right.

For thus stands your system: "If force, *i. e.* punishment, may be any way useful for the promoting the salvation of souls, there is a right somewhere to use it. And this right," say you, "is in the magistrate:" who then, upon your grounds, may quickly find reason, where it suits his inclination, or serves his turn, to punish men directly to bring them to his religion. For if he may use force because it "may be, indirectly and at a distance, any way useful towards the salvation of men's souls," towards the procuring any degree of glory; why may he not, by the same rule, use it where it may be useful, at least indirectly and at a distance, towards the procuring a greater degree of glory? For St. Paul assures us, "that the afflictions of this life work for us a far more exceeding weight of glory." So that why should they not be punished, if in the wrong, to bring them into the right way; if in the right, to make them by their sufferings "gainers of a far more exceeding weight of glory?" But whatever you say "of punishment being lawful, because, indirectly and at a distance, it may be useful;" I suppose, upon cooler thoughts, you will be apt to suspect that, however sufferings may promote the salvation of those who make a good use of them, and so set men surer in the right way, or higher in a state of glory; yet those who make men unduly suffer, will have the heavier account, and greater weight of guilt upon them, to sink them deeper in the pit of perdition; and that therefore they should be warned to take care of so using their power. Because whoever be gainers by it, they themselves will, without repentance and amendment, be sure to be losers. But by granting that the magistrate misapplies his power, when he punishes those who have the right on their side, whether it be to bring them to his own religion, or whether it be "to bring

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them to consider reasons and arguments proper to convince them," you grant all that the author contends for. All that he endeavours, is to show the bounds of civil power; and that in punishing others for religion, the magistrate misapplies the force he has in his hands, and so goes beyond right, beyond the limits of his power. For I do not think the author of the letter so vain, I am sure for my part I am not, as to hope by arguments, though ever so clear, to reform presently all the abuses in this matter; especially whilst men of art, and religion, endeavour so industriously to palliate and disguise, what truth, yet, sometimes, unawares forces from them.

Do not think I make a wrong use of your saying, "the magistrate misapplies his power," when I say you therein grant all that the author contends for. For if the magistrate misapplies, or makes wrong use of his power, when he punishes in matters of religion any one who is in the right, though it be but to make him consider, as you grant he does; he also misapplies, or makes wrong use of his power, when he punishes any one whomsoever in matters of religion, to make him consider. For every one is here judge for himself, what is right; and in matters of faith, and religious worship, another cannot judge for him. So that to punish any one in matters of religion, though it be but to make him consider, is by your own confession beyond the magistrate's power. And that punishing in matters of religion is beyond the magistrate's power is what the author contends for.

You tell us in the following words, "all the hurt that comes to them by it, is only the suffering some tolerable inconveniencies, for their following the light of their own reason, and the dictates of their own consciences; which certainly is no such mischief to mankind, as to make it more eligible, that there should be no such power vested in the magistrate, but the care of every man's soul should be left to himself alone (as this author demands it should be;) that is, that every man should be suffered, quietly, and without the least

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molestation, either to take no care at all of his soul, if he be so pleased; or, in doing it, to follow his own groundless prejudices, or unaccountable humour, or any crafty seducer, whom he may think fit to take for his guide." Why should not the care of every man's soul be left to himself, rather than the magistrate? Is the magistrate like to be more concerned for it? Is the magistrate like to take more care of it? Is the magistrate commonly more careful of his own, than other men are of theirs? Will you say the magistrate is less exposed, in matters of religion, to prejudices, humours, and crafty seducers, than other men? If you cannot lay your hand upon your heart, and say all this, what then will be got by the change? And "why may not the care of every man's soul be left to himself?" Especially, if a man be in so much danger to miss the truth, "who is suffered quietly, and without the least molestation, either to take no care of his soul, if he be so pleased, or to follow his own prejudices," &c. For if want of molestation be the dangerous state, wherein men are likeliest to miss the right way; it must be confessed, that, of all men, the magistrate is most in danger to be in the wrong, and so the unfittest, if you take the care of men's souls from themselves, of all men, to be intrusted with it. For he never meets with that great and only antidote of yours against error, which you here call molestation. He never has the benefit of your sovereign remedy, punishment, to make him consider; which you think so necessary, that you look on it as a most dangerous state for men to be without it; and therefore tell us, "it is every man's true interest, not to be left wholly to himself in matters of religion."

Thus, sir, I have gone through your whole treatise, and, as I think, have omitted nothing in it material. If I have, I doubt not but I shall hear of it. And now I refer it to yourself, as well as to the judgment of the world, whether the author of the letter, in saying nobody hath a right, or you, in saying the magistrate hath a right, to use force in matters of religion,

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has most reason. In the mean time, I leave this request with you: that if ever you write again, about "the means of bringing souls to salvation," which certainly is the best design any one can employ his pen in, you would take care not to prejudice so good a cause, by ordering it so, as to make it look as if you writ for a party.

I am, Sir,

Your most humble servant,

PHILANTHROPUS.

May 27, 1690.

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A

THIRD LETTER

FOR

TOLERATION.

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A

THIRD LETTER

FOR

TOLERATION.

TO THE AUTHOR OF THE THIRD LETTER CONCERNING TOLERATION *.

CHAPTER I.

SIR,

THE business which your Letter concerning Toleration found me engaged in, has taken up so much of the time my health would allow me ever since, that I doubt whether I should now at all have troubled you or the world with an answer, had not some of my friends, sufficiently satisfied of the weakness of your

* The reader may be pleased to take notice, that
L. I. Stands for the Letter concerning Toleration.
A. For the Argument of the Letter concerning Toleration briefly considered and answered.
L. II. The Second Letter concerning Toleration.
P. The pages of the Third Letter concerning Toleration.

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arguments, with repeated instances, persuaded me it might be of use to truth, in a point of so great moment, to clear it from those fallacies which might perhaps puzzle some unwary readers; and therefore prevailed on me to show the wrong grounds and mistaken reasonings you make use of to support your new way of persecution. Pardon me, sir, that I use that name, which you are so much offended at: for if punishment be punishment, though it come short of the discipline of fire and faggot, it is as certain that punishment for religion is truly persecution, though it be only such punishment as you in your clemency think fit to call "moderate and convenient penalties." But however you please to call them, I doubt not but to let you see, that if you will be true to your own principles, and stand to what you have said, you must carry your "some degrees of force," as you phrase it, to all those degrees which in words you declare against.

You have indeed in this last letter of yours altered the question; for, p. 26, you tell me the question between us is, "whether the magistrate hath any right to use force to bring men to the true religion?" Whereas you yourself own the question to be, "whether the magistrate has a right to use force in matters of religion?" Whether this alteration be at all to the advantage of truth, or your cause, we shall see. But hence you take occasion all along to lay a load on me for charging you with the absurdities of a power in the magistrates to punish men, to bring them to their religion; whereas you here tell us they have a right to use force "only to bring men to the true." But whether I were more to blame to suppose you to talk coherently and mean sense, or you in expressing yourself so doubtfully and uncertainly, where you were concerned to be plain and direct, I shall leave to our readers to judge; only here in the beginning, I shall endeavour to clear myself of that imputation, I so often meet with, of charging on you consequences you do not own, and arguing against an opinion that is not yours, in those places, where I show how little advantage it would be to truth, or the

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salvation of men's souls, that all magistrates should have a right to use force to bring men to embrace their religion. This I shall do by proving, that if upon your grounds the magistrate, as you pretend, be obliged to use force to bring men to the true religion, it will necessarily follow, that every magistrate, who believes his religion to be true, is obliged to use force to bring men to his.

You tell us, "that by the law of nature the magistrate is invested with coactive power, and obliged to use it for all the good purposes which it might serve, and for which it should be found needful, even for the restraining of false and corrupt religion: and that it is the magistrate's duty, to which he is commissioned by the law of nature, but the Scripture does not properly give it him."

I suppose you will grant me, that any thing laid upon the magistrate as a duty, is some way or other practicable. Now the magistrate being obliged to use force in matters of religion, but yet so as to bring men only to the true religion, he will not be in any capacity to perform this part of his duty, unless the religion he is thus to promote, be what he can certainly know, or else what it is sufficient for him to believe, to be the true: either his knowledge or his opinion must point out that religion to him, which he is by force to promote; or else he may promiscuously and indifferently promote any religion, and punish men at a venture, to bring them from that they are in to any other. This last I think nobody has been so wild as to say.

If therefore it must be either his knowledge or his persuasion that must guide the magistrate herein, and keep him within the bounds of his duty; if the magistrates of the world cannot know, certainly know, the true religion to be the true religion, but it be of a nature to exercise their faith; (for where vision, knowledge, and certainty is, there faith is done away,) then that which gives them the last determination herein must be their own belief, their own persuasion.

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To you and me the Christian religion is the true, and that is built, to mention no other articles of it, on this, that Jesus Christ was put to death at Jerusalem, and rose again from the dead. Now do you or I know this? I do not ask with what assurance we believe it, for that in the highest degree not being knowledge, is not what we now inquire after. Can any magistrate demonstrate to himself, and if he can to himself, he does ill not to do it to others, not only all the articles of his church, but the fundamental ones of the Christian religion? For whatever is not capable of demonstration, as such remote matters of fact are not, is not, unless it be self-evident, capable to produce knowledge, how well grounded and great soever the assurance of faith may be wherewith it is received; but faith it is still, and not knowledge; persuasion, and not certainty. This is the highest the nature of the thing will permit us to go in matters of revealed religion, which are therefore called matters of faith: a persuasion of our own minds, short of knowledge, is the last result that determines us in such truths. It is all God requires in the Gospel for men to be saved: and it would be strange if there were more required of the magistrate for the direction of another in the way to salvation, than is required of him for his own salvation. Knowledge then, properly so called, not being to be had of the truths necessary to salvation, the magistrate must be content with faith and persuasion for the rule of that truth he will recommend and enforce upon others; as well as of that whereon he will venture his own eternal condition. If therefore it be the magistrate's duty to use force to bring men to the true religion, it can be only to that religion which he believes to be true: so that if force be at all to be used by the magistrate in matters of religion, it can only be for the promoting that religion which he only believes to be true, or none at all. I grant that a strong assurance of any truth settled upon prevalent and well-grounded arguments of probability, is often called knowledge in popular ways of talking: but being here to distinguish between knowledge and belief, to what degrees of con-

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fidence soever raised, their boundaries must be kept, and their names not confounded. I know not what greater pledge a man can give of a full persuasion of the truth of any thing, than his venturing his soul upon it, as he does, who sincerely embraces any religion, and receives it for true. But to what degree soever of assurance his faith may rise, it still comes short of knowledge. Nor can any one now, I think, arrive to greater evidence of the truth of the Christian religion than the first converts in the time of our Saviour and the apostles had; of whom yet nothing more was required but to believe.

But supposing all the truths of the Christian religion necessary to salvation could be so known to the magistrate, that, in his use of force for the bringing men to embrace these, he could be guided by infallible certainty; yet I fear this would not serve your turn, nor authorize the magistrate to use force to bring men in England, or any where else, into the communion of the national church, in which ceremonies of human institution were imposed, which could not be known, nor, being confessed things in their own nature indifferent, so much as thought necessary to salvation.

But of this I shall have occasion to speak in another place; all the use I make of it here, is to show, that the cross in baptism, kneeling at the sacrament, and suchlike things, being impossible to be known necessary to salvation, a certain knowledge of the truth of the articles of faith of any church could not authorize the magistrate to compel men to embrace the communion of that church, wherein any thing were made necessary to communion, which he did not know was necessary to salvation.

By what has been already said, I suppose it is evident, that if the magistrate be to use force only for promoting the true religion, he can have no other guide but his own persuasion of what is the true religion, and must be led by that in his use of force, or else not use it at all in matters of religion. If you take the latter of these consequences, you and I are agreed: if the

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former, you must allow all magistrates, of whatsoever religion, the use of force to bring men to theirs, and so be involved in all those ill consequences which you cannot it seems admit, and hope to decline by your useless distinction of force to be used, not for any, but for the true religion.

"It is the duty, you say, of the magistrate to use force for promoting the true religion." And in several places you tell us, he is obliged to it. Persuade magistrates in general of this, and then tell me how any magistrate shall be restrained from the use of force, for the promoting what he thinks to be the true? For he being persuaded that it is his duty to use force to promote the true religion, and being also persuaded his is the true religion, what shall stop his hand? Must he forbear the use of force till he be got beyond believing, into a certain knowledge that all he requires men to embrace is necessary to salvation? If that be it you will, stand to, you have my consent, and I think there will be no need of any other toleration. But if the believing his religion to be the true, be sufficient for the magistrate to use force for the promoting of it, will it be so only to the magistrates of the religion that you profess? and must all other magistrates sit still, and not do their duty till they have your permission? If it be your magistrate's duty to use force for the promoting the religion he believes to be the true, it will be every magistrate's duty to use force for the promoting what he believes to be the true, and he sins if he does not receive and promote it as if it were true. If you will not take this upon my word, yet I desire you to do it upon the strong reason of a very judicious and reverend prelate [Dr. John Sharp, archbishop of York,] of the present church of England. In a discourse concerning conscience, printed in quarto, 1687, p. 18, you will find these following words, and much more to this purpose: "Where a man is mistaken in his judgment, even in that case it is always a sin to act against it. Though we should take that for a duty which is really a sin, yet so long as we are thus persuaded, it

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will be highly criminal in us to act in contradiction to this persuasion: and the reason of this is evident, because by so doing we wilfully act against the best light which at present we have for direction of our actions. So that when all is done, the immediate guide of our actions can be nothing but our conscience, our judgment, and persuasion. If a man, for instance, should of a Jew become a Christian, whilst yet in his heart he believed that the Messiah is not yet come, and that our Lord Jesus was an impostor: or if a papist should renounce the communion of the Roman church, and join with ours, whilst yet he is persuaded that the Roman church is the only catholic church, and that our reformed churches are heretical or schismatical; though now there is none of us that will deny that the men in both these cases have made a good change, as having changed a false religion for a true one, yet for all that I dare say we should all agree they were both of them great villains for making that change; because they made it not upon honest principles, and in pursuance of their judgment, but in direct contradiction to both." So that it being the magistrate's duty to use force to bring men to the true religion, and he being persuaded his is the true, I suppose you will no longer question but that he is as much obliged to use force to bring men to it, as if it were the true; and then, sir, I hope you have too much respect for magistrates not to allow them to believe the religions to be true which they profess.—These things put together, I desire you to consider whether if magistrates are obliged to use force to bring men to the true religion, every magistrate is not obliged to use force to bring men to that religion he believes to be true?

This being so, I hope I have not argued so wholly beside the purpose, as you all through your letter accuse me, for charging on your doctrine all the ill consequences, all the prejudice it would be to the true religion, that magistrates should have power to use force to bring men to their religions: and I presume you will think yourself concerned to give to all these places in

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the first and second letter concerning toleration, which show the inconveniencies and absurdities of such an use of force, some other answer than that "you are for punishing only such as reject the true religion. That it is plain the force you speak of is not force, my way applied, *i. e.* applied to the promoting the true religion only, but to the promoting all the national religions in the world." And again, to my arguing that force your way applied, if it can propagate any religion, it is likelier to be the false than the true, because few of the magistrates of the world are in the right way; you reply, "this would have been to the purpose, if 'you' had asserted that every magistrate may use force 'your' indirect way (or any way) to bring men to his own religion whatever that be. But if 'you' asserted no such thing, (as no man you think but an atheist will assert it) then this is quite beside the business." This is the great strength of your answer, and your refuge almost in every page. So that I will presume it reasonable to expect that you should clearly and directly answer what I have here said, or else find some other answer than what you have done to the second letter concerning toleration; however acute you are in your way, in several places, on this occasion, as p. 11, 12, for my answer to which I shall refer you to another place.

To my argument against force, from the magistrate's being as liable to error as the rest of mankind, you answer, That I "might have considered that this argument concerns none but those who assert that every magistrate has a right to use force to promote his own religion, whatever it be, which 'you' think no man that has any religion will assert." I suppose you may think now this answer will scarce serve, and you must assert either no magistrate to have right to promote his religion by force, or else be involved in the condemnation you pass on those who assert it of all magistrates. And here I think, as to the decision of the question betwixt us, I might leave this matter: but there being in your letter a great many other gross mistakes, wrong suppositions, and fallacious arguings,

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which in those general and plausible terms you have made use of in several places, as best served your turn, may possibly have imposed on yourself, as well as they are fitted to do so on others, and therefore will deserve to have some notice taken of them; I shall give myself the trouble of examining your letter a little farther.

To my saying, "It is not for the magistrate, upon an imagination of its usefulness, to make use of any other means than what the Author and Finisher of our faith had directed;" you reply, "which, how true soever, is not, I think, very much to the purpose; for if the magistrate does only assist that ministry which our Lord has appointed, by using so much of his coactive power for the furthering their service as common experience discovers to be useful and necessary for that end; there is no manner of ground to say, that, upon an imagination of its usefulness, he makes use of any other means for the salvation of men's souls than what the Author and Finisher of our faith has directed. It is true indeed the Author and Finisher of our faith has given the magistrate no new power or commission, nor was there any need that he should, (if himself had had any temporal power to give:) for he found him already, even by the law of nature, the minister of God to the people for good, and bearing the sword not in vain, *i. e.* invested with coactive power, and obliged to use it for all the good purposes which it might serve, and for which it should be found needful; even for the restraining of false and corrupt religion; as Job long before (perhaps before any part of the Scriptures were written) acknowledged, when he said, that the worshipping the sun or the moon was an iniquity to be punished by the judge. But though our Saviour has given the magistrates no new power, yet being King of kings, he expects and requires that they should submit themselves to his sceptre, and use the power which always belonged to them for his service, and for the advancing his spiritual kingdom in the world. And even that charity which our great Master so earnestly

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recommends, and so strictly requires of all his disciples, as it obliges all men to seek and promote the good of others, as well as their own, especially their spiritual and eternal good, by such means as their several places and relations enable them to use; so does it especially oblige the magistrate to do it as a magistrate, *i. e.* by that power which enables him to do it above the rate of other men.

"So far therefore is the Christian magistrate, when he gives his helping hand to the furtherance of the Gospel, by laying convenient penalties upon such as reject it, or any part of it, from using any other means for the salvation of men's souls than what the Author and Finisher of our faith has directed, that he does no more than his duty to God, to his Redeemer, and to his subjects, requires of him."

The sum of your reply amounts to this, that by the law of nature the magistrate may make use of his coactive power where it is useful and necessary for the good of the people. If it be from the law of nature, it must be to all magistrates equally: and then I ask, whether this good they are to promote without any new power or commission from our Saviour, be what they think to be so, or what they certainly know to be so. If it be what they think to be so, then all magistrates may use force to bring men to their religion: and what good this is like to be to men, or of what use to the true religion, we have elsewhere considered. If it be only that good which they certainly know to be so, they will be very ill enabled to do what you require of them, which you here tell us is to assist that ministry which our Lord has appointed. Which of the magistrates of your time did you know to have so well studied the controversies about ordination and church-government, to be so well versed in church-history and succession, that you can undertake that he certainly knew which was the ministry which our Lord had appointed, either that of Rome, or that of Sweden; whether the episcopacy in one part of this island, or the presbytery in another, were the ministry, which our Lord had appointed? If you say, being firmly persuaded of it be sufficient to authorize

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the magistrate to use force; you, with the atheists, as you call them, who do so, give the people up in every country to the coactive force of the magistrate to be employed for the assisting the ministers of his religion: and king Louis of good right comes in with his dragoons; for it is not much doubted that he as strongly believed his popish priests and Jesuits to be the ministry which our Lord appointed, as either king Charles or king James the Second believed that of the church of England to be so. And of what use such an exercise of the coactive power of all magistrates is to the people, or to the true religion, you are concerned to show. But it is, you know, but to tell me I only trifle, and this is all answered.

What in other places you tell us is to make men "hear, consider, study, embrace, and bring men to the true religion," you here do very well to tell us is to assist the ministry: and to that, it is true, "common experience discovers the magistrate's coactive force to be useful and necessary, viz. to those who taking the reward, but not over-busying themselves in the care of souls, find it for their ease, that the magistrate's coactive power should supply their want of pastoral care, and be made use of to bring those into an outward conformity to the national church, whom either for want of ability they cannot, or want of due and friendly application, joined with an exemplary life, they never so much as endeavoured to prevail on heartily to embrace it. That there may be such neglects in the best constituted national church in the world, the complaints of a very knowing bishop of our church, [Dr. Gilbert Burnet, bishop of Salisbury] in a late discourse of the *pastoral care*, is too plain an evidence.

Without so great an authority I should scarce have ventured, though it lay just in my way, to have taken notice of what is so visible, that it is in every one's mouth; for fear you should have told me again, "I made myself an occasion to show my good-will toward the clergy;" for you will not, I suppose, suspect that eminent prelate to have any ill-will to them.

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If this were not so, that some were negligent, I imagine the preachers of the true religion, which lies, as you tell us, so obvious and exposed, as to be easily distinguished from the false, would need or desire no other assistance from the magistrate's coactive power but what should be directed against the irregularity of men's lives; their lusts being that alone, as you tell us, that makes force necessary to assist the true religion; which, were it not for our depraved nature, would by its light and reasonableness have the advantage against all false religions.

You tell us too, that the magistrate may impose creeds and ceremonies; indeed, you say sound creeds, and decent ceremonies, but that helps not your cause; for who must be judge of that sound, and that decent? If the imposer, then those words signify nothing at all, but that the magistrate may impose those creeds and ceremonies which he thinks sound and decent, which is in effect such as he thinks fit. Indeed, you telling us a little above, in the same page, that it is "a vice not to worship God in ways prescribed by those to whom God has left the ordering of such matters;" you seem to make other judges of what is sound and decent, and the magistrate but the executor of their decrees, with the assistance of his coactive power. A pretty foundation to establish creeds and ceremonies on, that God has left the ordering of them to those who cannot order them! But still the same difficulty returns; for, after they have prescribed, must the magistrate judge them to be sound and decent, or must he impose them, though he judge them not sound or decent? If he must judge them so himself, we are but where we were: if he must impose them when prescribed, though he judge them not sound nor decent, it is a pretty sort of drudgery is put on the magistrate. And how far is this short of implicit faith? But if he must not judge what is sound and decent, he must judge at least who are those to whom God has left the ordering of such matters; and then the king of France is ready again with his dragoons for the sound doctrine and decent ceremonies of his prescribers in the council of Trent; and that upon

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this ground, with as good right as any other has for the prescriptions of any others. Do not mistake me again, sir; I do not say, he judges as right; but I do say, that whilst he judges the council of Trent, or the clergy of Rome, to be those to whom God has left the ordering of those matters, he has as much right to follow their decrees, as any other to follow the judgment of any other set of mortal men whom he believes to be so.

But whoever is to be judge of what is sound or decent in the case, I ask,

Of what use and necessity is it to impose creeds and ceremonies? For that use and necessity is all the commission you can find the magistrate hath to use his coactive power to impose them.

1. Of what use and necessity is it among Christians; that own the Scripture to be the word of God and rule of faith, to make and impose a creed? What commission for this hath the magistrate from the law of nature? God hath given a revelation that contains in it all things necessary to salvation, and of this his people are all persuaded. What necessity now is there? How does their good require it, that the magistrate should single out, as he thinks fit, any number of those truths as more necessary to salvation than the rest, if God himself has not done it?

2. But next, are these creeds in the words of the Scripture, or not? If they are, they are certainly sound, as containing nothing but truth in them: and so they were before, as they lay in the Scripture. But thus though they contain nothing but sound truths, yet they may be imperfect, and so unsound rules of faith, since they may require more or less than God requires to be believed as necessary to salvation. For what greater necessity, I pray, is there that a man should believe that Christ suffered under Pontius Pilate, than that he was born at Bethlehem of Judah? Both are certainly true, and no Christian doubts of either: but how comes one to be made an article of faith, and imposed by the magistrate as necessary to salvation, (for otherwise there can be no necessity of imposition) and the other not?

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Do not mistake me here, as if I would lay by that summary of the Christian religion which is contained in that which is called the Apostles' Creed; which though nobody, who examines the matter, will have reason to conclude of the apostles' compiling, yet is certainly of reverend antiquity, and ought still to be preserved in the church. I mention it not to argue against it, but against your imposition; and to show that even that creed, though of that antiquity, though it contain in it all the *credenda* necessary to salvation, cannot yet upon your principles be imposed by the coercive power of the magistrate, who, even by the commission you have found out for him, can use his force for nothing but what is absolutely necessary to salvation.

But if the creed to be imposed be not in the words of divine revelation; then it is in plainer, more clear and intelligible expressions, or not: If no plainer, what necessity of changing those which men inspired by the Holy Ghost made use of? If you say, they are plainer; then they explain and determine the sense of some obscure and dubious places of Scripture; which explication not being of divine revelation, though sound to one man, may be unsound to another, and cannot be imposed as truths necessary to salvation. Besides that, this destroys what you tell us of the obviousness of all truths necessary to salvation.

And as to rites and ceremonies, are there any necessary to salvation, which Christ has not instituted? If not, how can the magistrate impose them? What commission has he, from the care he ought to have for the salvation of men's souls, to use his coactive force for the establishment of any new ones which our Lord and Saviour, with due reverence be it spoken, had forgotten? He instituted two rites in his church; can any one add any new one to them? Christ commanded simply to baptize in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; but the signing the cross, how came that necessary? "Human authority, which is necessary to assist the truth against the corruption of nature," has made it so. But it is a "decent" ceremony. I ask,

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is it so decent that the administration of baptism, simply, as our Saviour instituted, would be indecent without it? If not, then there is no reason to impose it for decency's sake; for there can be no reason to alter or add any thing to the institution of Christ, or introduce any ceremony or circumstance into religion for decency, where the action would be decent without it. The command to "do all things decently, and in order," gave no authority to add to Christ's institution any new ceremony; it only prescribed the manner how, what was necessary to be done in the congregation, should be there done, viz. after such a manner, that if it were omitted, there would appear some indecency, whereof the congregation or collective body was to be judge, for to them that rule was given: And if that rule go beyond what I have said, and gives power to men to introduce into religious worship whatever they shall think decent, and impose the use of it; I do not see how the greatest part of the infinite ceremonies of the church of Rome could be complained of, or refused, if introduced into another church, and there imposed by the magistrate. But if such a power were given to the magistrate, that whatever he thought a decent ceremony he might *de novo* impose, he would need some express commission from God in Scripture, since the commission you say he has from the law of nature, will never give him a power to institute new ceremonies in the Christian religion, which, be they decent or what they will, can never be necessary to salvation.

The Gospel was to be preached in their assemblies; the rule then was, that the habit, gesture, voice, language, &c. of the preacher, for these were necessary circumstances of the action, should have nothing ridiculous or indecent in it. The praises of God were to be sung; it must be then in such postures and tunes as became the solemnity of that action. And so a convert was to be baptized; Christ instituted the essential part of that action, which was washing with water in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost: in which care was also to be had, that in the doing this nothing

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should be omitted that preserved a decency in all the circumstances of the action. But nobody will say, that, if the cross were omitted, upon that account there would be any thing indecent in baptism.

What is to be done in the assemblies of Christians for the salvation of souls, is sufficiently prescribed in Scripture: but since the circumstances of the actions were so various, and might in several countries and ages have different appearances, as that appears decent in one country which is quite contrary in another; concerning them there could be no other rule given than what is, viz. "decently, in order, and to edification;" and in avoiding indecencies, and not adding any new ceremonies, how decent soever, this rule consists.

I judge no man in the use of the cross in baptism. The imposition of that, or any other ceremony not instituted by Christ himself, is what I argue against, and say, is more than you upon your principles can make good.

Common sense has satisfied all mankind, that it is above their reach to determine what things, in their own nature indifferent, were fit to be made use of in religion, and would be acceptable to the superior beings in their worship, and therefore they have every where thought it necessary to derive that knowledge from the immediate will and dictates of the gods themselves, and have taught that their forms of religion and outward modes of worship were founded upon revelation: nobody daring to do so absurd and insolent a thing as to take upon him to presume with himself, or to prescribe to others by his own authority, which should in these indifferent and mean things be worthy of the Deity, and make an acceptable part of his worship. Indeed, they all agreed in the duties of natural religion, and we find them by common consent owning that piety and virtue, clean hands, and a pure heart, not polluted with the breaches of the law of nature, was the best worship of the gods. Reason discovered to them that a good life was the most acceptable thing to the Deity; this the common light of nature put past doubt. But for

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their ceremonies and outward performances, for them they appeal always to a rule received from the immediate direction of the superior powers themselves, where they made use of, and had need of revelation. A plain confession of mankind that in these things we have neither knowledge to discern, nor authority to prescribe: that men cannot by their own skill find out what is fit, or by their own power make any thing worthy to be a part of religious worship. It is not for them to invent or impose ceremonies that shall recommend men to the Deity. It was so obvious and visible, that it became men to have leave from God himself, before they dared to offer to the Divine Majesty any of these trifling, mean, and to him useless things, as a grateful and valuable part of his worship; that nobody any where, amongst the various and strange religions they led men into, bid such open defiance to common sense, and the reason of all mankind, as to presume to do it without vouching the appointment of God himself. Plato, who of all the heathens seems to have had the most serious thoughts about religion, says that the magistrate, or whoever has any sense, will never introduce of his own head any new rites into his religion: for which he gives this convincing reason; for, says he, "he must know it is impossible for human nature to know any thing certainly concerning these matters." Epinom. post medium. It cannot therefore but be matter of astonishment, that any who call themselves Christians, who have so sure and so full a revelation, which declares all the counsel of God concerning the way of attaining eternal salvation; should dare by their own authority to add any thing to what is therein prescribed, and impose it on others as a necessary part of religious worship, without the observance of which human inventions men shall not be permitted the public worship of God. If those rites and ceremonies prescribed to the Jews by God himself, and delivered at the same time and by the same hand to the Jews that the moral law was; were called beggarly elements under the Gospel, and laid by as useless and burthensome; what shall we call those rites which have no other foundation but the will and

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authority of men, and of men very often who have not much thought of the purity of religion, and practised it less?

Because you think your argument for the magistrate's right to use force has not had its due consideration, I shall here set it down in your own words, as it stands, and endeavour to give you satisfaction to it. You say there, "If such a degree of outward force as has been mentioned be of great and even necessary use, for the advancing those ends, (as, taking the world as we find it, I think it appears to be) then it must be acknowledged that there is a right somewhere to use it for the advancing those ends, unless we will say (what without impiety cannot be said) that the wise and benign Disposer and Governor of all things has not furnished mankind with competent means for the promoting his own honour in the world, and the good of souls. And if there be such a right somewhere, where should it be, but where the power of compelling resides? That is principally, and in reference to the public, in the civil sovereign." Which words, if they have any argument in them, it in short stands thus: Force is useful and necessary: The good and wise God, who without impiety cannot be supposed not to have furnished men with competent means for their salvation, has therefore given a right to some men to use it, and those men are the civil sovereigns.

To make this argument of any use to your purpose, you must speak a little more distinctly; for here you, according to your laudable and safe way of writing, are wrapped up in the uncertainty of general terms, and must tell us, besides the end for which it is useful and necessary, to whom it is useful and necessary. Is it useful and necessary to all men? That you will not say, for many are brought to embrace the true religion by bare preaching, without any force. Is it then necessary to all those, and those only, who, as you tell us, "reject the true religion tendered with sufficient evidence, or at least so far manifested to them, as to oblige them to receive it, and to leave them without excuse if they do not?" To all therefore who rejecting the true

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religion so tendered, are without excuse, your moderate force is useful and necessary. But is it to all those competent, *i. e.* sufficient means? That, it is evident in matter of fact, it is not; for, after all, many stand out. It is like you will say, which is all you have to say, that those are such, to whom, having resisted this last means, moderate force, God always refuseth his grace to, without which no means is efficacious. So that your competent, at last, are only such means as are the utmost that God has appointed, and will have used, and which, when men resist, they are without excuse, and shall never after have the assistance of his grace to bring them to that truth they have resisted, and so be as the apostle, 2 Tim. iii. 8, calls such, "men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith." If then it shall be, that the day of grace shall be over to all those who reject the truth manifested to them with such evidence as leaves them without excuse, and that bare preaching and exhortation shall be according to the good pleasure of the benign Disposer of all things enough, when neglected, "to make their hearts fat, their ears heavy, and shut their eyes, that they should not perceive nor understand, nor be converted, that God should heal them;" I say, if this should be the case, then your force, whatever you imagine of it, will neither be competent, useful, nor necessary. So that it will rest upon you to prove that your moderate degrees of force are those means of grace which God will have, as necessary to salvation, tried upon every one before he will pass that sentence in Isaiah, "Make his heart fat," &c. and that your degree of moderate force is that beyond which God will have no other or more powerful means used, but that those whom that works not upon shall be left reprobate concerning the faith. And till you have proved this, you will in vain pretend your moderate force, whatever you might think of it, if you had the ordering of that matter in the place of God, to be useful, necessary, and competent means. For if preaching, exhortation, instruction, &c. as seems by the whole current of the Scripture (and it appears not that Isaiah in the place

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above-cited made their hearts fat with any thing but his words) be that means, which when rejected to such a degree as he sees fit, God will punish with a reprobate mind, and that there be no other means of grace to come after; you must confess, that whatever good opinion you have of your moderate force after this sentence is passed, it can do no good, have no efficacy, neither directly nor indirectly and at a distance, towards the bringing men to the truth.

If your moderate force be not that precise utmost means of grace, which, when ineffectual, God will not afford his grace to any other, then your moderate force is not the competent means you talk of. This therefore you must prove, that preaching alone is not, but that your moderate force joined to it is that means of grace, which, when neglected or resisted, God will assist no other means with his grace to bring men into the obedience of the truth; and this, let me tell you, you must prove by revelation. For it is impossible to know, but by revelation, the just measures of God's long-suffering, and what those means are, which, when men's corruptions have rendered ineffectual, his Spirit shall no longer strive with them, nor his grace assist any other means for their conversion or salvation. When you have done this, there will be some ground for you to talk of your moderate force, as the means which God's wisdom and goodness are engaged to furnish men with; but to speak of it, as you do now, as if it were that both necessary and competent means, that it would be an imputation to the wisdom and goodness of God if men were not furnished with it, when it is evident, that the greatest part of mankind have always been destitute of it, will I fear be not easily cleared from that impiety you mention; for though the magistrate had the right to use it, yet wherever that moderate force was not made use of, there men were not furnished with your competent means of salvation.

It is necessary, for the vindication of God's justice and goodness, that those who miscarry should do so by their own fault, that their destruction should be from themselves, and they be left inexcusable: but pray how

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will you show us, that it is necessary, that any who have resisted the truth, tendered to them only by preaching, should be saved, any more than it is necessary that those who have resisted the truth, when moderate force has been joined to the same preaching, should be saved? They are inexcusable one as well as the other; and thereby have incurred the wrath of God, under which he may justly leave the one as well as the other; and therefore he cannot be said not to have been furnished with competent means of salvation, who, having rejected the truth preached to him, has never any penalties laid on him by the magistrate to make him consider the truths he before rejected.

All the stress of your hypothesis for the necessity of force, lies on this, That the majority of mankind are not prevailed on by preaching, and therefore the goodness and wisdom of God are obliged to furnish them some more effectual means, as you think. But who told you that the majority of mankind should ever be brought into the strait way and narrow gate? Or that force in your moderate degree was the necessary and competent, *i. e.* the just fit means to do it, neither over nor under, but that that only, and nothing but that, could do it? If, to vindicate his wisdom and goodness, God must furnish mankind with other means, as long as the majority, yet unwrought upon, shall give any forward demander occasion to ask, "What other means is there left?" he must also, after your moderate penalties have left the greater part of mankind unprevailed on, be bound to furnish mankind with higher degrees of force upon this man's demand: and those degrees of force proving ineffectual to the majority to make them truly and sincerely Christians; God must be bound to furnish the world again with a new supply of miracles upon the demand of another wise controller, who having set his heart upon miracles, as you have yours on force, will demand, what other means is there left but miracles? For it is like this last gentleman would take it very much amiss of you, if you should not allow this to be a good and unquestionable way of arguing; or if you should deny that, after the

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utmost force had been used, miracles might not do some service at least, indirectly and at a distance, towards the bringing men to embrace the truth. And if you cannot prove that miracles may not thus do some service, he will conclude just as you do, that the cause is his.

Let us try your method a little farther. Suppose that when neither the gentlest admonitions, nor the most earnest entreaties will prevail, something else is to be done, as the only means left. What is it must be done? What is this necessary competent means that you tell us of? "It is to lay briars and thorns in their way." This therefore being supposed necessary, you say, "there must somewhere be a right to use it." Let it be so. Suppose I tell you that right is in God, who certainly has a power to lay briars and thorns in the way of those who are got into a wrong one, whenever he has graciously pleased that other means besides instructions and admonitions should be used to reduce them. And we may as well expect that those thorns and briars laid in their way by God's providence, without telling them for what end, should work upon them as effectually, though indirectly and at a distance, as those laid in their way by the magistrate, without telling them for what end. God alone knows where it is necessary, and on whom it will be useful, which no man being capable of knowing, no man, though he has coercive power in his hand, can be supposed to be authorized to use it by the commission he has to do good, on whomsoever you shall judge it to be of great and even necessary use: no more than your judging it to be of great and even necessary use would authorize any one, who had got one of the incision-knives of the hospital in his hand, to cut those for the stone with it, whom he could not know needed cutting, or that cutting would do them any good, when the master of the hospital had given him no express order to use his incision-knife in that operation; nor was it known to any but the master, who needed, and on whom it would be useful; nor would he fail to use it himself wherever he found it necessary.

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Be force of as great and necessary use as you please; let it be so the competent means for the promoting the honour of God in the world, and the good of souls, that the right to use it must necessarily be somewhere. This right cannot possibly be, where you would have it, in the civil sovereigns, and that for the very reason you give, viz. because it must be where the power of compelling resides. For since civil sovereigns cannot compel themselves, nor can the compelling power of one civil sovereign reach another civil sovereign; it will not in the hands of the civil sovereigns reach the most considerable part of mankind, and those who, both for their own and their subjects' good, have most need of it. Besides, if it go along with the power of compelling, it must be in the hands of all civil sovereigns alike: which, by this, as well as several other reasons I have given, being unavoidable to be so, this right will be so far from useful, that whatever efficacy force has, it will be employed to the doing more harm than good; since the greatest part of civil sovereigns being of false religions, force will be employed for the promoting of those.

But let us grant what you can never prove, that though all civil sovereigns have compelling power, yet only those of the true religion have a right to use force in matters of religion: your own argument of mankind being unfurnished, which is impiety to say, with competent means for the promoting the honour of God and the good of souls, still presses you. For the compelling power of each civil sovereign not reaching beyond his own dominions, the right of using force in the hands only of the orthodox civil sovereigns leaves the rest, which is the far greater part of the world, destitute of this your necessary and competent means for promoting the honour of God in the world, and the good of souls.

Sir, I return you my thanks for having given me this occasion to take a review of your argument, which you told me I had mistaken; which I hope I now have not, and have answered to your satisfaction.

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I confess I mistook when I said that cutting, being judged useful, could not authorize even a skilful surgeon to cut a man without any further commission; for it should have been thus: that though a man has the instruments in his hand, and force enough to cut with, and cutting be judged by you of great and even necessary use in the stone; yet this, without any further commission, will not authorize any one to use his strength and knife in cutting, who knows not who has the stone, nor has any light or measures to judge to whom cutting may be necessary or useful.

But let us see what you say in answer to my instance: 1. "That the stone does not always kill, though it be not cured; but men do often live to a great age with it, and die at last of other distempers. But aversion to the true religion is certainly and inevitably mortal to the soul, if not cured, and so of absolute necessity to be cured." Is it of absolute necessity to be cured in all? If so, will you not here again think it requisite that the wise and benign Disposer and Governor of all things should furnish competent means for what is of absolute necessity? For will it not be impiety to say, that God has so left mankind unfurnished of competent, *i. e.* sufficient means for what is absolutely necessary? For it is plain in your account men have not been furnished with sufficient means for what is of absolute necessity to be cured in all, if in any of them it be left uncured. For as you allow none to be sufficient evidence, but what certainly gains assent; so by the same rule you cannot call that sufficient means, which does not work the cure. It is in vain to say, the means were sufficient, had it not been for their own fault, when that fault of theirs is the very thing to be cured. You go on: "and yet if we should suppose the stone as certainly destructive of this temporal life, as that aversion is of men's eternal salvation: even so the necessity of curing it would be as much less than the necessity of curing that aversion, as this temporal life falls short in value of that which is eternal." This is built upon a supposition, that the necessity of the

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means is increased by the value of the end, which being in this case the salvation of men's souls, that is of infinite concernment to them, you conclude salvation absolutely necessary: which makes you say that aversion, &c. being inevitably mortal to the soul, is of absolute necessity to be cured. Nothing is of absolute necessity but God: whatsoever else can be said to be of necessity, is so only relatively in respect to something else; and therefore nothing can indefinitely thus be said to be of absolute necessity, where the thing it relates to is not absolutely necessary. We may say, wisdom and power in God are absolutely necessary, because God himself is absolutely necessary: but we cannot crudely say, the curing in men their aversion to the true religion is absolutely necessary, because it is not absolutely necessary that men should be saved. But this is very proper and true to be said, that curing this aversion is absolutely necessary in all that shall be saved. But I fear that would not serve your turn, though it be certain that your absolute necessity in this case reaches no farther than this, that to be cured of this aversion is absolutely necessary to salvation, and salvation is absolutely necessary to happiness; but neither of them, nor the happiness itself of any man, can be said to be absolutely necessary.

This mistake makes you say, that supposing "the stone certainly destructive of this temporal life, yet the necessity of curing it would be as much less than the necessity of curing that aversion, as this temporal life falls short in value of that which is eternal." Which is quite otherwise: for if the stone will certainly kill a man without cutting, it is as absolutely necessary to cut a man for the stone for the saving of his life, as it is to cure the aversion for the saving of his soul. Nay, if you have but eggs to fry, fire is as absolutely necessary as either of the other, though the value of the end be in these cases infinitely different; for in one of them you lose only your dinner, in the other your life, and in the other your soul. But yet, in these cases, fire, cutting, and curing that aversion, are each of them

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absolutely and equally necessary to their respective ends, because those ends cannot be attained without them.

You say farther, "Cutting for the stone is not always necessary in order to the cure: but the penalties you speak of are altogether necessary (without extraordinary grace) to cure that pernicious and otherwise untractable aversion." Let it be so; but do the surgeons know who has this stone, this aversion, so that it will certainly destroy him, unless he be cut? Will you undertake to tell when the aversion is such in any man, that it is incurable by preaching, exhortation, and entreaty, if his spiritual physician will be instant with him in season, and out of season; but certainly curable, if moderate force be made use of? till you are sure of the former of these, you can never say your moderate force is necessary: till you are sure of the latter, you can never say, it is competent means. What you will determine concerning extraordinary grace, and when God bestows that, I leave you to consider, and speak clearly of it at your leisure.

You add, that even where "cutting for the stone is necessary, it is withal hazardous by my confession. But your penalties can no way endanger or hurt the soul, but by the fault of him that undergoes them." If the magistrate use force to bring men to the true religion, he must judge which is the true religion; and he can judge no other to be it but that which he believes to be the true religion, which is his own religion. But for the magistrate to use force to bring men to his own religion has so much danger in it to men's souls, that by your own confession, none but an atheist will say that magistrates may use force to bring men to their own religion.

This I suppose is enough to make good all that I aimed at in my instance of cutting for the stone, which was, that though it were judged useful, and I add now necessary, to cut men for the stone, yet that was not enough to authorize a surgeon to cut a man, but he must have, besides that general one of doing good, some more special commission; and that which I there men-

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tioned, was the patient's consent. But you tell me, "That though, as things now stand, no surgeon has any right to cut his calculous patient without his consent; yet if the magistrate should by a public law appoint and authorize a competent number of the most skilful in that art to visit such as labour under that disease, and to cut those (whether they consent or not) whose lives they unanimously judge it impossible to save otherwise: you are apt to think I would find it hard to prove that in so doing he exceeded the bounds of his power: and you are sure it would be as hard to prove that those artists would have no right in that case to cut such persons." Show such a law from the great Governor of the universe, and I shall yield that your surgeons shall go to work as fast as you please. But where is the public law? "Where is the competent number of magistrates skilful in the art, who must unanimously judge of the disease and its danger?" You can show nothing of all this, yet you are so liberal of this sort of cure, that one cannot take you for less than cutting Morecraft himself. But, sir, if there were a competent number of skilful and impartial men, who were to use the incision-knife on all in whom they found this stone of aversion to the true religion; what do you think, would they find no work in your hospital?

Aversion to the true religion you say is of absolute necessity to be cured: what I beseech you is that true religion? that of the church of England? For that you own to be the only true religion; and, whatever you say, you cannot upon your principles name any other national religion in the world that you will own to be the true. It being then of absolute necessity that men's aversion to the national religion of England should be cured: has all mankind, in whom it has been absolutely necessary to be cured, been furnished with competent and necessary means for the cure of this aversion?

In the next place, what is your necessary and sufficient means for this cure that is of absolute necessity? and that is moderate penalties made use of by the magistrate, where the national is the true religion, and sufficient means are provided for all men's instruction

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in the true religion. And here again I ask, have all men to whom this cure is of absolute necessity been furnished with this necessary means?

Thirdly, How is your necessary remedy to be applied? And that is in a way wherein it cannot work the cure, though we should suppose the true religion the national every where, and all the magistrates in the world zealous for it. To this true religion, say you, men have a natural and great aversion of absolute necessity to be cured, and the only cure for it is force your way applied, *i. e.* penalties must be laid upon all that dissent from the national religion, till they conform. Why are men averse to the true? Because it crosses the profits and pleasures of this life; and for the same reason they have an aversion to penalties: these, therefore, if they be opposed one to another, and penalties be so laid that men must quit their lusts, and heartily embrace the true religion, or else endure the penalties, there may be some efficacy in force towards bringing men to the true religion: but if there be no opposition between an outward profession of the true religion, and men's lusts; penalties laid on men till they outwardly conform are not a remedy laid to the disease. Punishments so applied have no opposition to men's lusts, nor from thence can be expected any cure. Men must be driven from their aversion to the true religion by penalties they have a greater aversion to. This is all the operation of force. But if by getting into the communion of the national church they can avoid the penalties, and yet retain their natural corruption and aversion to the true religion, what remedy is there to the disease by penalties so applied? You would, you say, have men made uneasy. This no doubt will work on men, and make them endeavour to get out of this uneasy state as soon as they can. But it will always be by that way wherein they can be most easy; for it is the uneasiness alone they fly from, and therefore they will not exchange one uneasiness for another; not for a greater, nor an equal, nor any at all, if they can help it. If therefore it be so uneasy for men to mortify their lusts, as you tell us, which the true religion requires of

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them, if they embrace it in earnest; but which outward conformity to the true religion, or any national church, does not require; what need or use is there of force applied so, that it meets not at all with men's lusts, or aversion to the true religion, but leaves them the liberty of a quiet enjoyment of them, free from force and penalties in a legal and approved conformity? Is a man negligent of his soul, and will not be brought to consider? obstinate, and will not embrace the truth? is he careless, and will not be at the pains to examine matters of religion? corrupt, and will not part with his lusts, which are dearer to him than his first-born? It is but owning the national profession, and he may be so still: if he conform, the magistrate has done punishing, he is a son of the church, and need not consider any thing farther for fear of penalties; they are removed, and all is well. So that at last there neither being an absolute necessity that aversion to the true religion should in all men be cured: nor the magistrate being a competent judge who have this stone of aversion, or who have it to that degree as to need force to cure it, or in whom it is curable, were force a proper remedy, as it is not: nor having any commission to use it, notwithstanding what you have answered: it is still not only as, but more reasonable for the magistrate, upon pretence of its usefulness or necessity, to cut any one for the stone without his own consent, than to use force your way to cure him of aversion to the true religion.

To my question, in whose hands this right, we were a little above speaking of, was in Turkey, Persia, or China? you tell me, "you answer roundly and plainly, "in the hands of the sovereign, to use convenient penalties for the promoting the true religion." I will not trouble you here with a question you will meet with elsewhere, who in these countries must be judge of the true religion? But I will ask, whether you or any wise man would have put a right of using force into a Mahommedan or pagan prince's hand, for the promoting of Christianity? Which of my pagans or Mahommedans would have done otherwise?

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But God, you say, has done it, and you make it good by telling me in the following words, "If this startle me, then you must tell me farther, that you look upon the supreme power to be the same all the world over, in what hands soever it is placed, and this right to be contained in it: and if those that have it do not use it as they ought, but instead of promoting true religion by proper penalties, set themselves to enforce Mohammedism or paganism, or any other false religion: all that can, or that needs be said to the matter, is, that God will one day call them to an account for the neglect of their duty, for the dishonour they do to him, and for the souls that perish by their fault." Your taking this right to be a part of the supreme power of all civil sovereigns, which is the thing in question, is not, as I take it, proving it to be so. But let us take it so for once, what then is your answer? "God will one day call those sovereigns to an account for the neglect of their duty." The question is not, what God will do with the sovereigns who have neglected their duty; but how mankind is furnished with your competent means of promoting God's honour in the world, and the good of souls in countries where the sovereign is of a wrong religion? For there, how clearly soever the right of using it be in the sovereign, yet as long as he uses not force to bring his subjects to the true religion, they are destitute of your competent means. For I imagine you do not make the right to use that force, but the actual application of it by penal laws, to be your useful and necessary means. For if you think the bare having that right be enough, if that be your sufficient means without the actual use of force, we readily allow it you. And, as I tell you elsewhere, I see not then what need you had of miracles "to supply the want of the magistrates' assistance till Christianity was supported and encouraged by the laws of the empire:" for, by your own rule, the magistrates of the world, during the three first centuries after the publishing the Christian religion, had the same right, if that had been enough, that they have now in Turkey, Persia, or China. That this is all that can be

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said in this matter, I easily grant you; but that it is all that needs be said to make good your doctrine, I must beg your pardon.

In the same sentence wherein you tell me, I should have added necessity to usefulness, I call it necessary usefulness, which I imagine is not much different. But that with the following words wherein my argument lay, had the ill luck to be overseen; but if you please to take my argument, as I have now again laid it before you, it will serve my turn.

In your next paragraph you tell me, that what is said by me is with the same ingenuity I have used in other places: my words in that place are these: "The author having endeavoured to show that nobody at all, of any rank or condition, had any power to punish, torment, or use any man ill for matters of religion: you tell us, you do not yet understand why clergymen are not as capable of such power as other men;" which words of mine containing in them nothing but true matter of fact, give you no reason to tax my ingenuity: nor will what you allege make it otherwise than such power; for if the power you there speak of were externally coactive power, is not that the same power the author was speaking of, made use of to those ends he mentions of tormenting and punishing? And do not you own that those who have that power ought to punish those who offend in rejecting the true religion? As to the remaining part of that paragraph, I shall leave the reader to judge whether I sought any occasion so much as to name the clergy; or whether the itching of your fingers to be handling the rod guided not your pen to what was nothing to the purpose: for the author has not said any thing so much as tending to exclude the clergy from secular employments, but only, if you will take your own report of it, that no ecclesiastical officer, as such, has any externally coactive power; whereupon you cry out, that "you do not yet understand why ecclesiastics or clergymen are not as capable of such power as other men." Had you stood to be constable of your parish, or of the hundred, you might have had cause to vindicate thus your capacity,

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if orders had been objected to you; or if your aim be at a justice of the peace, or lord chief justice of England, much more. However you must be allowed to be a man of forecast, in clearing the way to secular power, if you know yourself, or any of your friends desirous of it: otherwise, I confess you have reason to be on this occasion a little out of humour, as you are, for bringing this matter in question so wholly out of season. Nor will, I fear, the ill-fitted excuse you bring give yourself, or one who consults the places in both yours and the author's letter, a much better opinion of it. However I cannot but thank you for your wonted ingenuity, in saying, that "it seems I wanted an occasion to show my good-will to the clergy, and so I made myself one." And to find more work for the excellent gift you have this way, I desire you to read over that paragraph of mine again, and tell me whether you can find any thing said in it not true? Any advice in it that you yourself would disown? any thing that any worthy clergyman that adorns his function is concerned in? And when you have set it down in my words, the world shall be judge, whether I have showed any ill-will to the clergy. Till then I may take the liberty to own, that I am more a friend to them and their calling than those amongst them who show their forwardness to leave the word of God to serve other employments. The office of a minister of the Gospel requires so the whole man, that the very looking after their poor was, by the joint voice of the twelve apostles, called "leaving the word of God, and serving of tables." Acts iv. 2. But if you think no men's faults can be spoken of without ill-will, you will make a very ill preacher: or if you think this to be so only in speaking of mistakes in any of the clergy, there must be in your opinion something peculiar in their case, that makes it so much a fault to mention any of theirs; which I must be pardoned for, since I was not aware of it: and there will want but a little cool reflection to convince you, that had not the present church of England a greater number in proportion than possibly any other age of the church ever had, of those who by their pious lives

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and labours in their ministry adorn their profession; such busy men as cannot be content to be divines without being laymen too, would so little keep up the reputation which ought to distinguish the clergy, or preserve the esteem due to a holy, *i. e.* a separate order; that nobody can show greater good-will to them than by taking all occasions to put a stop to any forwardness to be meddling out of their calling. This, I suppose, made a learned prelate of our church, out of kindness to the clergy, mind them of their stipulation and duty in a late treatise, and tell them that "the pastoral care is to be a man's entire business, and to possess both his thoughts and his time." Disc. of Past. Care, p. 121.

To your saying, "That the magistrate may lay penalties upon those who refuse to embrace the doctrine of the proper ministers of religion, or are alienated from the truth:" I answered, "God never gave the magistrate an authority to be judge of truth for another man." This you grant; but withal say, "That if the magistrate knows the truth, though he has no authority to judge of truth for another man; yet he may be judge whether other men be alienated from the truth or no; and so may have authority to lay some penalties upon those whom he sees to be so, to bring them to judge more sincerely for themselves." For example, the doctrine of the proper ministers of religion is, that the three creeds, Nice, Athanasius's, and that commonly called the Apostles' Creed, ought to be thoroughly received and believed: as also that the Old and New Testament contain all things necessary to salvation. The one of these doctrines a papist subject embraces not; and a Socinian the other. What now is the magistrate by your commission to do? He is to lay penalties upon them, and continue them: How long? Only till they conform, *i. e.* till they profess they embrace these doctrines for true. In which case he does not judge of the truth for other men: he only judges that other men are alienated from the truth. Do you not now admire your own subtilty and acuteness? I

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that cannot comprehend this, tell you my dull sense in the case. He that thinks another man in an error, judges him, as you phrase it, alienated from the truth, and then judges of truth and falsehood only for himself. But if he lays any penalty upon others, which they are to lie under till they embrace for a truth what he judges to be so, he is then so far a judge of truth for those others. This is what I think to judge of truth for another means: if you will tell me what else it signifies, I am ready to learn.

"You grant," you say, "God never gave the magistrate any authority to be judge of truth for another man:" and then add, "But how does it follow from thence that he cannot be judge, whether any man be alienated from the truth or no?" And I ask you, who ever said any such thing did follow from thence? That which I say, and which you ought to disprove, is, that whoever punishes others for not being of the religion he judges to be true, judges of truth for others. But you prove that a man may be judge of truth, without having authority to judge of it for other men, or to prescribe to them what they shall believe, which you might have spared, till you meet with somebody that denies it. But yet your proof of it is worth remembering: "rectum," say you, "est index sui et obliqui. And certainly whoever does but know the truth may easily judge whether other men be alienated from it or no." But though "rectum be index sui et obliqui;" yet a man may be ignorant of that which is the right, and may take error for truth. The truth of religion, when known, shows what contradicts it is false: but yet that truth may be unknown to the magistrate, as well as to any other man. But you conclude, I know not upon what ground, as if the magistrate could not miss it, or were surer to find it than other men. I suppose you are thus favourable only to the magistrate of your own profession, as no doubt in civility a papist or a presbyterian would be to those of his. And then infer: "And therefore if the magistrate knows the truth, though he has no authority to judge of truth for other men,

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yet he may judge whether other men be alienated from the truth or no." Without doubt! who denies it him? It is a privilege that he and all men have, that when they know the truth, or believe the truth, or have embraced an error for truth, they may judge whether other men are alienated from it or no, if those other men own their opinions in that matter.

You go on with your inference, "and so may have authority to lay some penalties upon those whom he sees to be so." Now, sir, you go a little too fast. This he cannot do without making himself judge of truth for them: the magistrate, or any one, may judge as much as he pleases of men's opinions and errors; he in that judges only for himself: but as soon as he uses force to bring them from their own to his opinion, he makes himself judge of truth for them; let it be to bring them to judge more sincerely for themselves, as you here call it, or under what pretence or colour soever, for that what you say is but a pretence, the very expression discovers. For does any one ever judge insincerely for himself, that he needs penalties to make him judge more sincerely for himself? A man may judge wrong for himself, and may be known or thought to do so: but who can either know or suppose another is not sincere in the judgment he makes for himself, or, which is the same thing, that any one knowingly puts a mixture of falsehood into the judgment he makes? for as speaking insincerely is to speak otherwise than one thinks, let what he says be true or false; so judging insincerely must be to judge otherwise than one thinks, which I imagine is not very feasible. But how improper soever it be to talk of judging insincerely for one's self, it was better for you in that place to say, penalties were to bring men to judge more sincerely, rather than to say, more rightly, or more truly: for had you said, the magistrate might use penalties to bring men to judge more truly, that very word had plainly discovered, that he made himself a judge of truth for them. You therefore wisely chose to say what might best cover this contradiction to yourself, whether it were sense or no;

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which perhaps, whilst it sounded well, every one would not stand to examine.

One thing give me leave here to observe to you, which is, that when you speak of the entertainment subjects are to give to truth, *i. e.* the true religion, you call it believing; but this in the magistrate you call knowing. Now let me ask you, whether any magistrate, who laid penalties on any who dissented from what he judged the true religion, or, as you call it here, were alienated from the truth; was or could be determined in his judging of that truth by any assurance greater than believing? When you have resolved that, you will then see to what purpose is all you have said here concerning the magistrate's knowing the truth; which at last amounting to no more than the assurance wherewith a man certainly believes and receives a thing for true, will put every magistrate under the same, if there be any obligation to use force, whilst he believes his own religion. Besides, if a magistrate knows his religion to be true, he is to use means not to make his people believe, but know it also; knowledge of them, if that be the way of entertaining the truths of religion, being as necessary to the subjects as the magistrate. I never heard yet of a master of mathematics, who had the care of informing of others in those truths, who ever went about to make any one believe one of Euclid's propositions.

The pleasantness of your answer, notwithstanding what you say, doth remain still the same: for you making, as is to be seen, "the power of the magistrate is *ordained* for the bringing men to take such care as they ought of their salvation," the reason why it is every man's interest to vest this power in the magistrate must suppose this power so ordained before the people vested it; or else it could not be an argument for their vesting it in the magistrate. For if you had not here built upon your fundamental supposition, that this power of the magistrate is ordained by God to that end, the proper and intelligible way of expressing your meaning had not been to say as you do: "As the power

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of the magistrate is ordained for bringing, &c. so if we suppose this *power* vested in the magistrate by the people:" in which way of speaking, this power of the magistrate is evidently supposed already ordained. But a clear way of making your meaning understood had been to say, That for the people to ordain such a power of the magistrate, or to vest such a power in the magistrate, which is the same thing, was their true interest: but whether it were your meaning or your expression that was guilty of the absurdity, I shall leave it with the reader.

As to the other pleasant thing of your answer, it will still appear by barely reciting it: the pleasant thing I charge on you is, that you say, That "the power of the magistrate is to bring men to such a care of their salvation, that they may not blindly leave it to the choice of any person, or their own lusts or passions, to prescribe to them what faith or worship they shall embrace;" and yet that it is their best course "to vest a power in the magistrate," liable to the same lusts and passions as themselves, to choose for them. To this you answer, by asking, where it is that you say that it is the people's best course to vest a power in the magistrate to choose for them? That you tell me I do not pretend to show. If you had given yourself the pains to have gone on to the end of the paragraph, or will be pleased to read it as I have here again set it down for your perusal, you will find that I at least pretended to show it. My words are these: "If they vest a power in the magistrate to punish them when they dissent from his religion, to bring them to act even against their own inclination, according to reason and sound judgment," which is, as you explain yourself in another place, "to bring them to consider reasons and arguments proper and sufficient to convince them; how far is this from leaving it to the choice of another man to prescribe to them what faith or worship they shall embrace?" Thus far you cite my words; to which let me join the remaining part of the paragraph, to let you see that I pretended to show that the course

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you proposed to the people, as best for them, was to vest a power in the magistrate to choose for them. My words, which follow those where you left off, are these: "Especially if we consider, that you think it a strange thing, that the author would have the care of every man's soul left to himself alone. So that this care being vested in the magistrate, with a power to punish men to make them consider reasons and arguments proper and sufficient to convince them of the truth of his religion; the choice is evidently in the magistrate, as much as it can be in the power of one man to choose for another what religion he shall be of; which consists only in a power of compelling him by punishments to embrace it." But all this, you tell me, "is just nothing to the purpose." Why, I beseech you? "Because you speak not of the magistrate's religion, but of the true religion, and that proposed with sufficient evidence."

The case in short is this: men are apt to be misled by their passions, lusts, and other men, in the choice of their religion. For this great evil you propose a remedy, which is, that men (for you must remember you are here speaking of the people putting this power into the magistrate's hand) should choose some of their fellow-men, and give them a power by force to guard them, that they might not be alienated from the truth by their own passions, lusts, or by other men. So it was in the first scheme; or, as you have it now, to punish them, whenever they rejected the true religion, and that proposed with sufficient evidence of the truth of it. A pretty remedy, and manifestly effectual at first sight; that because men were all promiscuously apt to be misled in their judgment, or choice of their religion, by passion, lust, and other men, therefore they should choose some amongst themselves, who might, they and their successors, men made just like themselves, punish them that rejected the true religion.

"If the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch," says our Saviour. If men, apt to be misled by their passions and lusts, will guard themselves from

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falling into error by punishments laid on them by men as apt to be misled by passions and lusts as themselves, how are they safer from falling into error? Now hear the infallible remedy for this inconvenience, and admire: the men to whom they have given this power must not use it till they find those who gave it them in an error. A friend, to whom I showed this expedient, answered, This is none: for why is not a man as fit to judge for himself when he is in an error, as another to judge for him, who is as liable to error himself? I answered, This power, however, in the other can do him no harm, but may, indirectly and at a distance, do him good; because the magistrate, who has this power to punish him, must never use it but when he is in the right, and he that is punished is in the wrong. But, said my friend, who shall be judge whether he be in the right or no? For men in an error think themselves in the right, and that as confidently as those who are most so. To which I replied, Nobody must be judge; but the magistrate may know when he is in the right. And so may the subject too, said my friend, as well as the magistrate, and therefore it was as good still to be free from a punishment, that gives a man no more security from error than he had without it. Besides, said he, who must be judge whether the magistrate knows or no? For he may mistake, and think it to be knowledge and certainty, when it is but opinion and belief. It is no matter for that, in this scheme, replied I; the magistrate, we are told, may know which is the true religion, and he must not use force but to bring men to the true religion; and if he does, God will one day call him to an account for it, and so all is safe. As safe as beating the air can make a thing, replied my friend; for if believing, being assured, confidently being persuaded that they know that the religion they profess is true, or any thing else short of true knowledge, will serve the turn, all magistrates will have this power alike, and so men will be well guarded, or recovered from false religions, by putting it into the magistrate's hand to punish them when they have alienated themselves from it.

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If the magistrate be not to punish men but when he knows, *i. e.* is infallibly certain (for so is a man in what he knows), that his national religion is all true, and knows also, that it has been proposed to those he punishes with sufficient evidence of the truth of it: it would have been as good this power had never been given him, since he will never be in a condition to exercise it: and at best it was given him to no purpose, since those who gave it him were one with another as little indisposed to consider impartially, examine diligently, study, find, and infallibly know the truth, as he. But, said he at parting, to talk thus of the magistrate's punishing men that reject the true religion, without telling us who those magistrates are, who have a power to judge which is the true religion, is to put this power in all magistrates' hands alike, or none; for to say he only is to be judge which is the true religion who is of it, is but to begin the round of inquiries again, which can at last end nowhere but in every one's supposing his own to be it. But, said he, if you will continue to talk on thus, there is nothing more to be done with you, but to pity or laugh at you; and so he left me.

I assure you, sir, I urged this part of your hypothesis with all the advantage I thought your answer afforded me; and if I have erred in it, or there be any way to get out of the strait (if force must in your way be used) either of the magistrate's punishing men for rejecting the true religion, without judging which is the true religion; or else that the magistrate should judge which is the true religion; which way ever of the two you shall determine it, I see not what advantage it can be to the people, to keep them from choosing amiss, that this power of punishing them shall be put into the magistrate's hands.

And then, if the magistrate must judge which is the true religion; as how he should, without judging, punish any one who rejects it, is hard to find; and punish men who reject it until they embrace it, let it be to make them consider, or what you please, he does, I think, choose their religion for them. And if you have

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not the dexterity to choose the national religion wherever you are, I doubt not but that you would think so too if you were in France, though there were none but moderate penalties laid on you, to bring you, even against your own inclination, to act according to what they there call reason and sound judgment.

That paragraph and mine, to which it is an answer, run thus:

L. II. p. 128.— "I do neither you nor the magistrate injury when I say that the power you give the magistrate of punishing men to make them consider reasons and arguments proper and sufficient to convince them, is to convince them of the truth of his religion, and to bring them to it. For men will never, in his opinion, act according to reason and sound judgment, which is the thing you here say men should be brought to by the magistrate, even against their own inclination, till they embrace his religion. And if you have

L. III. p. 67. "But it seems you have not done with this yet: for you say, 'you do neither me nor the magistrate injury, when you say that the power I give the magistrate, of punishing men to make them consider reasons and arguments proper and sufficient to convince them, is to convince them of the truth of his religion, whatever that be, and to bring them to it.' Which seems a little strange and pleasant too. But thus you prove it: 'For men will never, in his opinion, act according to reason and sound judgment, till they embrace his religion. And if you have the brow of an honest man, you will not say the magistrate will ever punish you, to bring you to consider any other reasons and arguments but such as are proper to convince you of the truth of his religion, and to bring you to that. Which (besides the pleasant talk of such reasons and arguments as are proper and sufficient to convince men of the truth of the magistrate's religion,' though it be a false one) is just as much as to say, It is so, because in the

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the brow of an honest man, you will not say the magistrate will ever punish you, to bring you to consider any other reasons and arguments, but such as are proper to convince you of the truth of his religion, and to bring you to that. Thus you shift forwards and backwards. You say, the magistrate has no power to punish men to compel them to his religion; but only to compel them to consider reasons and arguments proper to convince them of the truth of his religion; which is all one as to say, nobody has power to choose your way for you to Jerusalem; but yet the lord of the manor has power to punish you, to bring you to consider reasons and arguments proper magistrate's opinion it is so; and because it is not to be expected that he will act against his opinion. As if the magistrate's opinion could change the nature of things, and turn a power to promote the true religion into a power to promote a false one. No, sir, the magistrate's opinion has no such virtue. It may indeed keep him from exercising the power he has to promote the true religion; and it may lead him to abuse the pretence of it to the promoting a false one: but it can neither destroy that power, nor make it any thing but what it is. And therefore, whatever the magistrate's opinion be, his power was given him (as the apostles' power was to them) for edification only, not for destruction: and it may always be said of him (what St. Paul said of himself) that he can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth. And therefore, if the magistrate punishes me to bring me to a false religion, it is not his opinion that will excuse him, when he comes to answer for it to his Judge. For certainly men are as accountable for their opinions (those of them, I mean, which influence their practice) as they are for their actions.

"Here is, therefore, no shifting forwards and backwards, as you pretend; nor any circle, but in your own imagination. For though it be true that I say, 'the magi-

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and sufficient to convince you. Of what? that the way he goes in is the right, and so to make you join in company, and go along with him. So that, in effect, what is all your going about, but to come at last to the same place again; and put a power into the magistrate's hands, under another pretence, to compel men to his religion? which use of force the author has sufficiently overthrown, and you yourself have quitted. But I am tired to follow you so often round the same circle."

strate has no power to punish men, to compel them to his religion,' yet I nowhere say, nor will it follow from any thing I do say," 'That he has power to compel them to consider reasons and arguments proper to convince them of the truth of his religion.' But I do not much wonder that you endeavour to put this upon me.' For I think by this time it is pretty plain, that otherwise you would have but little to say: and it is an art very much in use amongst some sort of learned men, when they cannot confute what an adversary does say, to make him say what he does not; that they may have something which they can confute."

The beginning of this answer is part of the old song of triumph. "What! reasons and arguments proper and sufficient to convince men of the truth of falsehood?" Yes, sir, the magistrate may use force to make men consider those reasons and arguments, which he thinks proper and sufficient to convince men of the truth of his religion, though his religion be a false one. And this is as possible for him to do, as for a man as learned as yourself to write a book, and use such arguments as he thinks proper and sufficient to convince

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men of the truth of his opinion, though it be a falsehood.

As to the remaining part of your answer, the question is not, whether the "magistrate's opinion can change the nature of things, or the power he has, or excuse him to his Judge for misusing of it?" But this, that since all magistrates, in your opinion, have commission, and are obliged to promote the true religion by force, and they can be guided in the discharge of this duty by nothing but their own opinion of the true religion, what advantage can this be to the true religion, what benefit to their subjects, or whether it amounts to any more than a commission to every magistrate to use force for the promoting his own religion? To this question, therefore, you will do well to apply your answer, which a man of less skill than you will be scarce able to do.

You tell us indeed, that "whatever the magistrate's opinion be, his power was given him (as the apostles' power was to them) for edification only, and not for destruction." But if the apostles' power had been given them for one end, and St. Paul, St. Peter, and nine other of the twelve had nothing to guide them but their own opinion, which led them to another end; I ask you whether the edification of the church could have been carried on as it was?

You tell us farther, that "it may always be said of the magistrate (what St. Paul said of himself) that he can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth." Witness the king of France. If you say this in the same sense that St. Paul said it of himself, who, in all things requisite for edification, had the immediate direction and guidance of the unerring Spirit of God, and so was infallible, we need not go to Rome for an infallible guide; every country has one in their magistrate. If you apply these words to the magistrate in another sense than what St. Paul spoke them in of himself, sober men will be apt to think you have a great care to insinuate into others a high veneration for the magistrate; but

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that you yourself have no over-great reverence for the Scripture, which you thus use; nor for truth, which you thus defend.

To deny the magistrate to have a power to compel men to his religion; but yet to say the magistrate has a power, and is bound to punish men to make them consider, till they cease to reject the true religion; of which true religion he must be judge, or else nothing can be done in discharge of this his duty; is so like going round about to come to the same place, that it will always be a circle in mine and other people's imagination, and not only there, but in your hypothesis.

All that you say turns upon the truth or falsehood of this proposition: "That whoever punishes any one in matters of religion to make him consider, takes upon him to be judge for another what is right in matters of religion." This you think plainly involves a contradiction; and so it would, if these general terms had in your use of them their ordinary and usual meaning. But, sir, be but pleased to take along with you, that whoever punishes any man your way in matters of religion, to make him consider, as you use the word consider, takes upon him to be judge for another what is right in matters of religion: and you will find it so far from a contradiction, that it is a plain truth. For your way of punishing is a peculiar way, and is this: that the magistrate, where the national religion is the true religion, should punish those who dissent from it, to make them consider as they ought, *i. e.* till they cease to reject, or, in other words, till they conform to it. If therefore he punishes none but those who dissent from, and punishes them till they conform to that which he judges the true religion, does he not take on him to judge for them what is the true religion?

It is true indeed what you say, there is no other reason to punish another to make him consider, but that he should judge for himself: and this will always hold true amongst those who, when they speak of considering, mean considering, and nothing else. But then these things will follow from thence: 1. That in in-

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flicting of penalties to make men consider, the magistrate of a country, where the national religion is false, no more misapplies his power, than he whose religion is true; for one has as much right to punish the negligent to make them consider, study, and examine matters of religion, as the other. 2. If the magistrate punishes men in matters of religion, truly to make them consider, he will punish all that do not consider, whether conformists or non-conformists. 3. If the magistrate punishes in matters of religion to make men consider, it is, as you say, "to make men judge for themselves; for there is no use of considering, but in order to judging." But then when a man has judged for himself, the penalties for not considering are to be taken off: for else your saying "that a man is punished to make him consider, that he may judge for himself," is plain mockery. So that either you must reform your scheme, or allow this proposition to be true, viz. "Whoever punishes any man in matters of religion, to make him in your sense consider, takes upon him to judge for another what is right in matters of religion:" and with it the conclusion, viz. "Therefore whoever punishes any one in matters of religion, to make him consider, takes upon him to do what no man can do, and consequently misapplies his power of punishing, if he has that power. Which conclusion, you say, you should readily admit as sufficiently demonstrated, if the proposition before-mentioned were true."

But further, if it could enter into the head of any law-maker but you to punish men for the omission of, or to make them perform any internal act of the mind, such as is consideration; whoever in matters of religion would lay an injunction on men to make them consider, could not do it without judging for them in matters of religion; unless they had no religion at all, and then they come not within our author's toleration; which is a toleration only of men of different religions, or of different opinions in religion; for supposing you the magistrate with full power, and, as you imagined,

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right of punishing any one in matters of religion, how could you possibly punish any one to make him consider, without judging for him what is right in matters of religion? I will suppose myself brought before your worship, under what character you please, and then I desire to know what one or more questions you would ask me, upon my answer to which you could judge me fit to be punished to make me consider, without taking upon you to judge for me what is right in matters of religion? For I conclude from the fashion of my coat, or the colour of my eyes, you would not judge that I ought to be punished in matters of religion to make me consider. If you could, I should allow you not only as capable, but much more capable of coactive power than other men.

But since you could not judge me to need punishment in matters of religion, to make me consider, without knowing my thoughts concerning religion, we will suppose you, being of the church of England, would examine me in the catechism and liturgy of that church, which possibly I could neither say nor answer right to. It is like, upon this, you would judge me fit to be punished to make me consider. Wherein, it is evident, you judged for me, that the religion of the church of England was right; for without that judgment of yours you would not have punished me. We will suppose you to go yet further, and examine me concerning the Gospel, and truth of the principles of the Christian religion, and you will find me answer therein not to your liking: here again no doubt you will punish me to make me consider; but is it not because you judge for me, that the Christian religion is the right? Go on thus as far as you will, and, till you find I had no religion at all, you could not punish me to make me consider, without taking upon you to judge for me what is right in matters of religion.

To punish without a fault is injustice; and to punish a man without judging him guilty of that fault, is also injustice; and to punish a man who has any religion to make him consider, or, which is the same thing, for

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not having sufficiently considered; is no more nor less but punishing him for not being of the religion you think best for him; that is the fault, and that is the fault you judge him guilty of, call it considering as you please: for let him fall into the hands of a magistrate of whose religion he is, he judgeth him to have considered sufficiently. From whence it is plain, it is religion is judged of, and not consideration, or want of consideration. And it is in vain to pretend that he is punished to make him judge for himself; for he that is of any religion, has already judged for himself; and if you punish him after that, under pretence to make him consider that he may judge for himself; it is plain you punish him to make him judge otherwise than he has already judged, and to judge as you have judged for him.

Your next paragraph complains of my not having contradicted the following words of yours, which I had cited out of your A. p. 26, which, that the reader may judge of, I shall here set down again: "And all the hurt that comes to them by it, is only the suffering some tolerable inconveniencies, for their following the light of their own reason, and the dictates of their own consciences: which certainly is no such mischief to mankind, as to make it more eligible that there should be no such power vested in the magistrate, but the care of every man's soul should be left to him alone, (as this author demands it should be:) that is, that every man should be suffered quietly, and without the least molestation, either to take no care at all of his soul, if he be so pleased; or, in doing it, to follow his own groundless prejudices, or unaccountable humour, or any crafty seducer, whom he may think fit to take for his guide." To which I shall here subjoin my answer and your reply:

L. II. p. 136. "Why should not the care of every man's soul be left	L. III. p. 76. "Which words you set down at large; but instead of contradicting them, or offering to show that the mischief spoken of

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to himself, rather than the magistrate? Is the magistrate like to be more concerned for it? Is the magistrate like to take more care of it? Is the magistrate commonly more careful of his own, than other men are of theirs? Will you say the magistrate is less exposed, in matters of religion, to prejudices, humours, and crafty seducers, than other men? If you cannot lay your hand on your heart, and say all this, what then will be got by the change? And why may not the care of every man's soul be left to himself? Especially, if a man be in so much danger to miss the truth, 'who is suffered quietly, and without the least molestation, either to take no care of his soul, if he be so is such as makes it more eligible; &c. you only demand, 'Why should not the care of every man's soul be left to himself, rather than the magistrate? Is the magistrate like to be more concerned for it? Is the magistrate like to take more care of it?' &c. As if not to leave the care of every man's soul to himself alone, were, as you express it afterwards, to take the care of men's souls from themselves: or as if to vest a power in the magistrate, to procure, as much as in him lies, (*i. e.* as far as it can be procured by convenient penalties) that men take such care of their souls as they ought to do, were to leave the care of their souls 'to the magistrate rather than to themselves:' which no man but yourself will imagine. I acknowledge as freely as you can do, that as every man is more concerned than any man else can be, so he is likewise more obliged to take care of his soul; and that no man can by any means be discharged of the care of his soul; which, when all is done, will never be saved but by his own care of it. But do I contradict any thing of this, when I say, that the care of every man's soul ought not to be left to himself alone? Or, that it is the interest of mankind, that the magistrate be intrusted and obliged to take care, as far as lies in him, that no man neglect his own soul? I thought, I confess, that every man was in some sort charged with

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pleased, or to follow his own prejudices,' &c. For if want of molestation be the dangerous state wherein men are likeliest to miss the right way, it must be confessed, that, of all men, the magistrate is most in danger to be in the wrong; and so the unfittest, if you take the care of men's souls from themselves, of all men, to be intrusted with it. For he never meets with that great and only antidote of yours against error, which you here call molestation. He never has the benefit of your sovereign remedy, punishment, to make him consider; which you think so necessary, that you look on it as a most dangerous state for men to be without it; and therefore tell us, It is every man's true the care of his neighbour's soul. But, in your way of reasoning, he that affirms this, takes away the care of every man's soul from himself, and leaves it to his neighbour rather than to himself. But if this be plainly absurd, as every one sees it is, then so it must be likewise to say, that he that vests such a power as we here speak of in the magistrate, takes away the care of men's souls from themselves, and places it in the magistrate, rather than in themselves."

"What trifling then is it to say here, 'If you cannot lay your hand upon your heart, and say all this, viz. that the magistrate is like to be more concerned for other men's souls than themselves, &c. What then will be got by the change?' For it is plain, here is no such change as you would insinuate: but the care of souls, which I assert to the magistrate, is so far from discharging any man of the care of his own soul, or lessening his obligation to it, that it serves to no other purpose in the world, but to bring men, who otherwise would not, to consider and do what the interest of their souls obliges them to.

"It is therefore manifest, that the thing here to be considered is not, whether the magistrate be 'like to be more concerned for other men's souls, or to take more care of them than themselves: nor whether he be commonly more

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interest, not to be left wholly to himself in matters of religion." careful of his own soul than other men are of theirs: nor whether he be less exposed, in matters of religion, to prejudices, humours, and crafty seducers, than other men: nor yet, whether he be not more in danger to be in the wrong than other men, in regard that he never meets with that great and only antidote of mine (as you call it) against error, which I here call molestation.' But the point upon which this matter turns is only this, whether the salvation of souls be not better provided for, if the magistrate be obliged to procure, as much as in him lies, that every man take such care as he ought of his soul, than if he be not so obliged, but the care of every man's soul be left to himself alone? which certainly any man of common sense may easily determine. For as you will not, I suppose, deny but God has more amply provided for the salvation of your own soul, by obliging your neighbour, as well as yourself, to take care of it; though it is possible your neighbour may not be more concerned for it than yourself; or may not be more careful of his own soul than you are of yours; or may be no less exposed, in matters of religion, to prejudices, &c. than you are; because if you are yourself wanting to your own soul, it is more likely that you will be brought to take care of it, if your neighbour be obliged to admonish and exhort you to it, than if he be not; though it may fall out that he will not do what he is obliged to do in that case. So I think it cannot be denied, but the salvation of all men's souls is better provided for, if besides the obligation which every man has to take care of his own soul (and that which every man's neighbour has likewise to do it) the magistrate also be intrusted and obliged to see that no man neglect his soul; than it would be, if every man were left to himself in this matter: because though we should admit that the magistrate is not like to be, or is not ordinarily more concerned for other men's souls than they themselves are, &c. it is nevertheless undeniably true still, that whoever neglects

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his soul, is more likely to be brought to take care of it, if the magistrate be obliged to do what lies in him to bring him to do it, than if he be not. Which is enough to show, that it is every man's true interest, that the care of his soul should not be left to himself alone, but that the magistrate should be so far intrusted with it as I contend that he is."

Your complaint of my not having formally contradicted the words above cited out of A. p. 26, looking as if there were some weighty argument in them: I must inform my reader, that they are subjoined to those, wherein you recommend the use of force in matters of religion, by the gain those that are punished shall make by it, though it be misapplied by the magistrate to bring them to a wrong religion. So that these words of yours, "all the hurt that comes to them by it," is all the hurt that comes to men by a misapplication of the magistrate's power, who being of a false religion, he uses force to bring men to it. And then your proposition stands thus, "That the suffering what you call tolerable inconveniencies for their following the light of their own reasons, and the dictates of their own consciences, is no such mischief to mankind as to make it more eligible, that there should be no power vested in the magistrate" to use force to bring men to the true religion, though the magistrates misapply this power, *i. e.* use it to bring men to their own religion when false.

This is the sum of what you say, if it has any coherent meaning in it: for it being to show the usefulness of such a power vested in the magistrate, under the miscarriages and misapplications it is in common practice observed to be liable to, can have no other sense. But I having proved, that if such a power be by the law of nature vested in the magistrate, every magistrate is obliged to use it for the promoting of his religion as far as he believes it to be true, shall not much trouble myself, if like a man of art you should use your skill to give it another sense: for such is your natural talent, or

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great caution, that you love to speak indefinitely, and, as seldom as may be, leave yourself accountable for any propositions of a clear, determined sense; but under words of doubtful, but seeming plausible signification, conceal a meaning, which plainly expressed would, at first sight, appear to contradict your own positions, or common sense: instances whereof, more than one, we have here in this sentence of yours. For, 1. The words tolerable inconveniencies carry a very fair show of some very slight matter; and yet, when we come to examine them, may comprehend any of those severities lately used in France; for these tolerable inconveniencies are the same you in this very page and elsewhere call convenient penalties. Convenient for what? In this very place they must be such as may keep men "from following their own groundless prejudices, unaccountable humours, and crafty seducers." And you tell us, the magistrate may require men "under convenient penalties to forsake their false religions, and embrace the true." Who now must be judge, in these cases, what are convenient penalties? Common sense will tell us, the magistrate that uses them: but besides, we have your word for it, that the magistrate's prudence and experience enable him to judge best what penalties do agree with your rule of moderation, which, as I have shown, is no rule at all. So that at last your tolerable inconveniencies are such as the magistrate shall judge convenient to oppose to men's prejudices, humours, and to seducers; such as he shall think convenient to bring men from their false religions, or to punish their rejecting the true: which, whether they will not reach men's estates and liberties, or go as far as any the king of France has used, is more than you can be security for. 2. Another set of good words we have here, which at first hearing are apt to engage men's concern, as if too much could not be done to recover men from so perilous a state as they seem to describe; and those are "men following their own groundless prejudices, unaccountable humours, or crafty seducers." Are not these expressions to set forth a deplorable condition,

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and to move pity in all that hear them? Enough to make the inattentive reader ready to cry out, Help for the Lord's sake! do any thing rather than suffer such poor, prejudiced, seduced people to be eternally lost! Where he that examines what persons these words can in your scheme describe, will find they are only such as any where dissent from those articles of faith, and ceremonies of outward worship, which the magistrate, or at least you his director, approve of; for whilst you talk thus of the true religion in general, and that so general, that you cannot allow yourself to descend so near to particulars, as to recommend the searching and study of the Scriptures to find it; and that the power in the magistrate's hands to use force is to bring men to the true religion; I ask, whether you do not think either he or you must be judge which is the true religion, before he can exercise that power? and then he must use his force upon all those who dissent from it, who are then the prejudiced, humorsome, and seduced, you here speak of. Unless this be so, and the magistrate be judge, I ask, who shall resolve which is the prejudiced person, the prince with his politics, or he that suffers for his religion? Which the more dangerous seducer, Louis XIV. with his dragoons, or Mr. Claud with his sermons? It will be no small difficulty to find out the persons who are guilty of following groundless prejudices, unaccountable humours, or crafty seducers, unless in those places where you shall be graciously pleased to decide the question; and out of the plenitude of your power and infallibility to declare which of the civil sovereigns now in being do, and which do not, espouse the one only true religion; and then we shall certainly know that those who dissent from the religion of those magistrates, are these prejudiced, humorsome, seduced persons.

But truly, as you put it here, you leave the matter very perplexed, when you defend the eligibleness of vesting a power in the magistrate's hands, to remedy by penalties men's following their own groundless prejudices, unaccountable humours, and crafty seducers;

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when in the same sentence you suppose the magistrate, who is vested with this power, may inflict those penalties on men, "for their following the light of their own reason, and the dictates of their own consciences;" which when you have considered, perhaps you will not think my answer so wholly beside the matter, though it showed you but that one absurdity, without a formal contradiction to so loose and undetermined a proposition, that it required more pains to unravel the sense of what was covered under deceitful expressions, than the weight of the matter contained in them was worth.

For besides what is already said to it: how is it possible for any one, who had the greatest mind in the world to contradiction, to deny it to be more eligible that such a power should be vested in the magistrate, till he knows to whom you affirm it to be more eligible? Is it more eligible to those who suffer by it, for following the light of their own reason, and the dictates of their own consciences? for these you know are gainers by it, for they know better than they did before where the truth does lie. Is it more eligible to those who have no other thoughts of religion, but to be of that of their country without any farther examination? Or is it more eligible to those who think it their duty to examine matters of religion, and to follow that which upon examination appears to them the truth? The former of these two make, I think, the greater part of mankind, though the latter be the better advised: but upon what grounds it should be more eligible to either of them, that the magistrate should, than that he should not, have a power vested in him, to use force to bring men to the true religion, when it cannot be employed but to bring men to that which he thinks the true, *i. e.* to his own religion, is not easy to guess. Or is it more eligible to the priests and ministers of national religions every where, that the magistrate should be vested with this power? who being sure to be orthodox, will have right to claim the assistance of the magistrate's power to bring those whom their arguments cannot prevail on to embrace their true religion, and to worship God in decent ways prescribed by those to whom God has left

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the ordering of such matters. Or, last of all, is it more eligible to all mankind? And are the magistrates of the world so careful or so lucky in the choice of their religion, that it would be an advantage to mankind, that they should have a right to do what in them lies, *i. e.* to use all the force they have, if they think convenient, to bring men to the religion they think true? When you have told us to which of these, or what other, it is more eligible; I suppose the reader will, without my contradicting it, see how little truth there is in it, or how little to your purpose.

If you will pardon me for not having contradicted that passage of yours we have been considering, I will endeavour to make you amends in what you say in reply to my answer to it, and tell you, that, notwithstanding all you say to the contrary, such a power as you would have to be vested in the magistrate, takes away the care of men's souls from themselves, and places it in the magistrate, rather than in themselves; for if, when men have examined, and upon examination embrace what appears to them the true religion, the magistrate has a right to treat them as misled by prejudice, humour, or seducers; if he may use what force, and inflict what punishments, he shall think convenient till they conform to the religion the magistrate judges the true; I think you will scarce deny, but that the care of their souls is by such a power placed rather in the magistrate than in themselves, and taken as much from them as by force and authority it can be. This, whatever you pretend, is the power which your system places in the magistrate. Nor can he upon your principles exercise it otherwise, as I imagine I have showed.

You speak here, as if this power, which you would have to be vested in the magistrate, did not at all discharge, but assist the care every one has or ought to have of his own soul. I grant, were the power you would place in the magistrate such as every man has to take care of his neighbour's soul, which is to express itself only by counsel, arguments, and persuasion, it left him still the free liberty of judging for himself; and so the care of his soul remained still in his own

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hands. But if men be persuaded, that the wise and good God has vested a power in the magistrate, to be so far judge for them, what is the true religion, as to punish them for rejecting the religion which the magistrate thinks the true, when offered with such evidence as he judges sufficient to convince them; and to punish them on till they consider so as to embrace it; what remains, but that they render themselves to the care and conduct of a guide that God in his goodness has appointed them, who having authority and commission from God to be judge for them which is the true religion, and what are arguments proper and sufficient to convince any one of it; and he himself being convinced of it; why should they be so foolish as to suffer punishments in opposition to a power which is in the right, and they ought to submit to? To what purpose should they, under the weight of penalties, waste time and pains in examining, since whatever they should judge upon examination, the magistrate judging the arguments and reasons he offers for the truth of his religion proper and sufficient to convince them, they must still lie under the punishment the magistrate shall think convenient till they do comply?

Besides, when they are thus punished by their magistrate for not conforming, what need they examine? since you tell them, "It is not strictly necessary to salvation, that all that are of the true religion should understand the grounds of it." The magistrate, being of the one only true religion, knows it to be so; and he knows that that religion was tendered to them with sufficient evidence, and therefore is obliged to punish them for rejecting it. This is that which men must upon your scheme suppose; for it is what you yourself must suppose, before the magistrate can exercise that power you contend to be vested in him, as is evident to any one who will put your system together, and particularly weigh what you say.

When, therefore, men are put into such a state as this, that the magistrate may judge what is the true religion, the magistrate may judge what is sufficient

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evidence of its truth; the magistrate may be judge to whom it is tendered with sufficient evidence, and punish them that reject it so proposed with such penalties as he also shall judge convenient; and all this by God's appointment, and an authority received from the wise and benign Governor of all things; I ask, whether the care of men's souls is not taken out of their own hands, and put into the magistrate's? Whether in such a state they can or will think there is any need, or that it is to any purpose for them to examine? And whether this be a cure for the natural aversion that is in men to consider and weigh matters of religion; and the way to force, or so much as encourage them to examine?

But, say you, "the salvation of all men's souls is better provided for, if, besides the obligation that every man has to take care of his own soul, the magistrate also be intrusted and obliged to see that no man neglect his own soul, than it would be if every man were left to himself in that matter." Whatever ground another may have to say this, you can have none: you who give so good reason why conformists, though ever so ignorant and negligent in examining matters of religion, cannot yet be punished to make them consider, must acknowledge that "*all* men's salvation is not the better provided for by a power vested in the magistrate," which cannot reach the far greatest part of men, which are every where the conformists to the national religion. You that plead so well for the magistrate's not examining whether those that conform do it upon reason and conviction, but say it is ordinarily presumable they do so; wherein, I beseech you, do you put this care of men's salvation that is placed in the magistrate? even in bringing them to outward conformity to the national religion, and there leaving them. And are the souls of all mankind the better provided for, if the magistrates of the world are vested with a power to use force to bring men to an outward profession of what they think the true religion, without any other care of their salvation? For thither, and no farther, reaches their use of force in your way of applying it.

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Give me leave therefore to trifle with you once again, and to desire you to lay your hand upon your heart, and tell me what mankind shall gain by the change? For I hope by this time it is not so much a paradox to you, that if the magistrate be commissioned by God to take care of men's souls in your way, it takes away the care of men's souls from themselves in all those who have need of this assistance of the magistrate, *i. e.* all those who neglect to consider, and are averse to examination.

One thing more give me leave to observe to you, and that is, that taking care of men's souls, or taking care that they neglect not their souls, and laying penalties on them to bring them in outward profession to the national religion, are two very different things; though in this place and elsewhere you confound them, and would have penal laws, requiring church-conformity, pass under the name of care of men's souls; for that is the utmost your way of applying force does or can reach to; and what care is therein taken of men's souls, may be seen by the lives and knowledge observable in not a few conformists. This is not said to lay any blame on conformity, but to show how improperly you speak, when you call penal laws made to promote conformity, and force used to bring men to it, a care of men's souls; when even the exactest observers and most zealous advancers of conformity may be as irreligious, ignorant, and vicious, as any other men.

In the first treatise we heard not a syllable of any other use or end of force in matters of religion, but only to make men consider. But in your second, being forced to own bare-faced the punishing of men for their religion, you call it "a vice to reject the true faith, and to refuse to worship God in decent ways prescribed by those to whom God has left the ordering it;" and tell us, that "it is a fault which may justly be punished by the magistrate, not to be of the national religion, where the true is the national religion." To make this doctrine of persecution seem limited, and go down the better, to your telling us it must be

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only where the national religion is the true, and that the penalties must be moderate and convenient,—both which limitations having no other judge but the magistrate, as I have showed elsewhere, are no limitations at all,—you in words add a third, that in effect signifies just as much as the other two; and that is, "If there be sufficient means of instruction provided for all for instructing them in the truth of it;" of which provision the magistrate also being to be judge, your limitations leave him as free to punish all dissenters from his own religion as any persecutor can wish: for what he will think sufficient means of instruction, it will be hard for you to say.

In the mean time, as far as may be gathered from what you say in another place, we will examine what you think sufficient provision for instructing men, which you have expressed in these words: "For if the magistrate provides sufficiently for the instruction of all his subjects in the true religion, and then requires them all, under convenient penalties, to hearken to the teachers and ministers of it, and to profess and exercise it with one accord under their direction in public assemblies."—That which stumbles one at the first view of this your method of instruction is, that you leave it uncertain whether dissenters must first be instructed, and then profess; or else first profess, and then be instructed in the national religion. This you will do well to be a little more clear in the next time; for your mentioning no instruction but in public assemblies, and perhaps meaning it for a country where there is little other pains taken with dissenters but the confutation and condemnation of them in assemblies, where they are not; they must cease to be dissenters before they can partake of this sufficient means of instruction.

And now for those who do with one accord put themselves under the direction of the ministers of the national, and hearken to these teachers of the true religion: I ask whether one-half of those whereof most of the assemblies are made up do or can, so ignorant as

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they are, understand what they hear from the pulpit? And then whether if a man did understand, what in many assemblies ordinarily is delivered once a week there for his instruction, he might not yet at threescore years end be ignorant of the grounds and principles of the Christian religion? Your having so often in your letter mentioned sufficient provision of instruction, has forced these two short questions from me. But I forbear to tell you what I have heard very sober people, even of the church of England, say upon this occasion: for you have warned me already, that it shall be interpreted to be a quarrel to the clergy in general, if any thing shall be taken notice of in any of them worthy to be mended. I leave it to those whose profession it is to judge, whether divinity be a science wherein men may be instructed by an harangue or two once a week, upon any subject at a venture, which has no coherence with that which preceded or that which is to follow; and this made to people that are ignorant of the first principles of it, and are not capable of understanding such discourses. I am sure he that should think this a sufficient means of instructing people in any other science, would at the end of seven or twenty years find them very little advanced in it; and, bating perhaps some terms and phrases belonging to it, as far from all true and useful knowledge of it as when they first began. Whether it be so in matters of religion, those who have the opportunity to observe must judge; and if it appear that amongst those of the national church there be very many so ignorant, that there is nothing more frequent than for the ministers themselves to complain of it; it is manifest from those of the national church, whatever may be concluded from dissenters, that the means of instruction provided by the law are not sufficient; unless that be sufficient means of instruction, which men of sufficient capacity for other things may live under many years, and yet know very little by. If you say it is for want of consideration, must not your remedy of force be used to bring them to it? Or how will the magistrate answer for it, if he

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use force to make dissenters consider, and let those of his own church perish for want of it?

This being all one can well understand by your sufficient means of instruction, as you there explain it, I do not see but men, who have no aversion to be instructed, may yet fail of it, notwithstanding such a provision. Perhaps, by "exercising the true religion with one accord, under the direction of the ministers of it in public assemblies," you mean something farther; but that not being an ordinary phrase, will need your explication to make it understood.

CHAPTER II.

Of the Magistrate's Commission to use Force in Matters of Religion.

Though in the foregoing chapter, on examining your doctrine concerning the magistrates who may or who may not use force in matters of religion, we have in several places happened to take notice of the commission whereby you authorize magistrates to act, yet we shall in this chapter more particularly consider that commission. You tell us, "to use force in matters of religion, is a duty of the magistrate as old as the law of nature, in which the magistrate's commission lies: for the Scripture does not properly give it him, but supposes it." And more at large you give us an account of the magistrate's commission in these words: "It is true, indeed, the Author and Finisher of our faith has given the magistrate no new power or commission: nor was there any need that he should (if himself had any temporal power to give): for he found him already, even by the law of nature, the minister

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of God to the people for good, and bearing the sword not in vain, *i. e.* invested with coactive power, and obliged to use it for all the good purposes which it might serve, and for which it should be found needful, even for the restraining of false and corrupt religion: as Job long before (perhaps before any of the Scriptures were written) acknowledged, when he said, chap. xxxi. 26, 27, 28, that the worshipping the sun or the moon was an iniquity to be punished by the judge. But though our Saviour has given the magistrates no new power, yet being King of kings, he expects and requires that they should submit themselves to his sceptre, and use the power which always belonged to them for his service, and for the advancing his spiritual kingdom in the world. And even that charity which our great Master so earnestly recommends, and so strictly requires of all his disciples, as it obliges all men to seek and promote the good of others, as well as their own, especially their spiritual and eternal good, by such means as their several places and relations enable them to use; so does it especially oblige the magistrate to do it as a magistrate, *i. e.* by that power which enables him to do it above the rate of other men.

"So far, therefore, is the Christian magistrate, when he gives his helping hand to the furtherance of the Gospel, by laying convenient penalties upon such as reject it, or any part of it, from using any other means for the salvation of men's souls than what the Author and Finisher of our faith has directed, that he does no more than his duty to God, to his Redeemer, and to his subjects, requires of him."

"Christ," you say, "has given no new power or commission to the magistrate:" and for this you give several reasons. 1. "There was no need that he should." Yet it seems strange that the Christian magistrates alone should have an exercise of coactive power in matters of religion, and yet our Saviour should say nothing of it, but leave them to that commission which was common to them with all other magistrates. The Christian religion, in cases of less moment, is not wanting in its

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rules; and I know not whether you will not charge the New Testament with a great defect, if that law alone which teaches the only true religion, that law which all magistrates, who are of the true religion, receive and embrace, should say nothing at all of so necessary and important a duty to those who alone are in a capacity to discharge it, but leave them only to that general law of nature, which others, who are not qualified to use this force, have in common with them.

This at least seems needful, if a new commission does not, that the Christian magistrates should have been instructed what degree of force they should use, and been limited to your moderate penalties; since for above these twelve hundred years, though they have readily enough found out your commission to use force, they never found out your moderate use of it, which is that alone which you assure us is useful and necessary.

2. You say, "If our Saviour had any temporal power to give;" whereby you seem to give this as a reason why he gave not the civil magistrate power to use force in matters of religion, that he had it not to give. You tell us in the same paragraph, that "he is the King of kings;" and he tells us himself, "That all power is given unto him in heaven and in earth," Matth. xxviii. 18. So that he could have given what power, to whom, and to what purpose he had pleased: and concerning this there needs no if.

3. "For he found him already, by the law of nature, invested with coactive power, and obliged to use it for all the good purposes which it might serve, and for which it should be found needful." He found also fathers, husbands, masters, invested with their distinct powers by the same law, and under the same obligation; and yet he thought it needful to prescribe to them in the use of those powers. But there was no need he should do so to the civil magistrates in the use of their power in matters of religion; because, though fathers, husbands, masters, were liable to excess in the use of theirs, yet Christian magistrates were not, as appears by their having always kept to those moderate mea-

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sures, which you assure us to be the only necessary and useful.

And what at last is their commission? "Even that of charity, which obliges all men to seek and promote the good of others, especially their spiritual and eternal good, by such means as their several places and relations enable them to use, especially magistrates as magistrates." This duty of charity is well discharged by the magistrate as magistrate, is it not? in bringing men to an outward profession of any, even of the true religion, and leaving them there? But, sir, I ask you who must be judge what is for the spiritual and eternal good of his subjects, the magistrate himself or no? If not he himself, who for him? Or can it be done without any one's judging at all? If he, the magistrate, must judge every where himself what is for the spiritual and eternal good of his subjects,—as I see no help for it, if the magistrate be every where by the law of nature obliged to promote their spiritual and eternal good,—is not the true religion like to find great advantage in the world by the use of force in the magistrate's hands? And is not this a plain demonstration that God has, by the law of nature, given commission to the magistrate to use force for the promoting the true religion, since, as it is evident, the execution of such a commission will do so much more harm than good?

To show that your indirect and at a distance usefulness, with a general necessity of force, authorizes the civil power in the use of it, you use the following words, "That force does some service towards the making of scholars and artists, I suppose you will easily grant. Give me leave, therefore, to ask, how it does it? I suppose you will say, not by its direct and proper efficacy (for force is no more capable to work learning or arts, than the belief of the true religion in men, by its direct and proper efficacy), but by prevailing upon those who are designed for scholars or artists to receive instruction, and to apply themselves to the use of those means and helps which are proper to make them what they are designed to be: that is, it does it indirectly and at a distance. Well, then, if all the

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usefulness of the force towards the bringing scholars or apprentices to the learning or skill they are designed to attain be only an indirect and at a distance usefulness, I pray what is it that warrants and authorizes schoolmasters, tutors, or masters, to use force upon their scholars or apprentices to bring them to learning, or the skill of their arts and trade, if such an indirect and at a distance usefulness of force, together with that necessity of it which experience discovers, will not do it? I believe you will acknowledge that even such an usefulness, together with that necessity, will serve the turn in these cases. But then I would fain know, why the same kind of usefulness, joined with the like necessity, will not as well do it in the case before us? I confess I see no reason why it should not; nor do I believe you can assign any. You ask here, what authorizes schoolmasters or masters to use force on their scholars and apprentices, if such an indirect and at a distance usefulness, together with necessity, does not do it?" I answer, neither your indirect and at a distance usefulness, nor the necessity you suppose of it. For I do not think you will say, that any schoolmaster has a power to teach, much less to use force on any one's child, without the consent and authority of the father: but a father, you will say, has a power to use force to correct his child to bring him to learning or skill in that trade he is designed to; and to this the father is authorized by the usefulness and necessity of force. This I deny, that the mere supposed usefulness and necessity of force authorize the father to use it; for then, whenever he judged it useful and necessary for his son, to prevail with him to apply himself to any trade, he might use force upon him to that purpose; which I think neither you nor any body else will say a father has a right to do, on his idle and perhaps married son, at thirty or forty years old.

There is, then, something else in the case; and whatever it be that authorizes the father to use force upon his child, to make him a proficient in it, authorizes him also to choose that trade, art, or science he would have him a proficient in: for the father can no longer

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use force upon his son, to make him attain any art or trade, than he can prescribe to him the art or trade he is to attain. Put your parallel now if you please: The father by the usefulness and necessity of force is authorized to use it upon his child, to make him attain any art or science; therefore the magistrate is authorized to use force to bring men to the true religion, because it is useful and necessary. Thus far you have used it, and you think it does well. But let us go on with the parallel: this usefulness and necessity of force authorizes the father to use it, to make his son apply himself to the use of the means and helps which are proper to make him what he is designed to be, no longer than it authorizes the father to design what his son shall be, and to choose for him the art or trade he shall be of: and so the usefulness and necessity you suppose in force to bring men to any church, cannot authorize the magistrate to use force any farther than he has a right to choose for any one what church or religion he shall be of. So that if you will stick to this argument, and allow the parallel between a magistrate and a father, and the right they have to use force for the instructing of their subjects in religion, and children in arts, you must either allow the magistrate to have power to choose what religion his subjects shall be of, which you have denied, or else that he has no power to use force to make them use means to be of it.

A father being intrusted with the care and provision for his child, is as well bound in duty, as fitted by natural love and tenderness, to supply the defects of his tender age. When it is born, the child cannot move itself for the ease and help of natural necessities; the parents' hands must supply that inability, and feed, cleanse, and swaddle it. Age having given more strength, and the exercise of the limbs, the parents are discharged from the trouble of putting meat into the mouth of the child, clothing or unclothing, or carrying him in their arms. The same duty and affection which required such kind of helps to the infant, make them extend their thoughts to other cares for him when he is grown a little bigger: it is not only a present support, but a

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future comfortable subsistence begins to be thought on: to this some art or science is necessary; but the child's ignorance and want of prospect makes him unable to choose. And hence the father has a power to choose for him, that the flexible and docile part of life may not be squandered away, and the time of instruction and improvement be lost for want of direction. The trade or art being chosen by the father, it is the exercise and industry of the child must acquire it to himself: but industry usually wanting in children the spur which reason and foresight gives to the endeavours of grown men, the father's rod and correction is fain to supply that want, to make him apply himself to the use of those means and helps which are proper to make him what he is designed to be. But when the child is once come to the state of manhood, and to be the possessor and free disposer of his goods and estate, he is then discharged from this discipline of his parents, and they have no longer any right to choose any art, science, or course of life for him, or by force to make him apply himself to the use of those means which are proper to make him be what he designs to be. Thus the want of knowledge to choose a fit calling, and want of knowledge of the necessity of pains and industry to attain skill in it, puts a power into the parents' hands to use force where it is necessary to procure the application and diligence of their children, in that which their parents have thought fit to set them to: but it gives this power to the parents only, and to no other, whilst they live; and if they die whilst their children need it, to their substitutes; and there it is safely placed: for since their want of knowledge, during their nonage, makes them want direction,—and want of reason often makes them need punishment and force to excite their endeavours, and keep them intent to the use of those means that lead to the end they are directed to,—the tenderness and love of parents will engage them to use it only for their good, and generally to quit it too, when by the title of manhood they come to be above the direction and discipline of children. But how does this prove that the magistrate has any right to force men to apply themselves to

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the use of those means and helps which are proper to make them of any religion, more than it proves that the magistrate has a right to choose for them what religion they shall be of?

To your question therefore, "what is it that warrants and authorizes schoolmasters, tutors, and masters to use force upon their scholars or apprentices?" I answer, a commission from the father or mother, or those who supply their places; for without that no indirect or at a distance usefulness, or supposed necessity, could authorize them.

But then you will ask, Is it not this usefulness and necessity that gives this power to the father and mother? I grant it. "I would fain know then," say you, "why the same usefulness, joined with the like necessity, will not as well do in the case before us?" And I, sir, will as readily tell you: because the understanding of the parents is to supply the want of it in the minority of their children; and therefore they have a right not only to use force to make their children apply themselves to the means of acquiring any art or trade, but to choose also the trade or calling they shall be of. But when, being come out of the state of minority, they are supposed of years of discretion to choose what they will design themselves to be, they are also at liberty to judge what application and industry they will use for the attaining of it; and then how negligent soever they are in the use of the means, how averse soever to instruction or application, they are past the correction of a schoolmaster, and their parents can no longer choose or design for them what they shall be, nor "use force to prevail with them to apply themselves to the use of those means and helps which are proper to make them what they are designed to be." He that imagines a father or tutor may send his son to school at thirty or forty years old, and order him to be whipped there, or that any indirect and at a distance usefulness will authorize him to be so used, will be thought fitter to be sent thither himself, and there to receive due correction.

When you have considered, it is otherwise in the case of the magistrate using force your way in matters of re-

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ligion; that there his understanding is not to supply the defect of understanding in his subjects, and that only for a time; that he cannot choose for any of his subjects what religion he shall be of, as you yourself confess; and that this power of the magistrate, if it be, as is claimed by you, over men of all ages, parts, and endowments; you will perhaps "see some reason why it should not do in the case before us, as well as in that of schoolmasters and tutors, though you believe I cannot assign any." But, sir, will your indirect and at a distance usefulness, together with your supposed necessity, authorize the master of the shoemakers' company to take any one who comes in his hands, and punish him for not being of the shoemakers' company, and not coming to their guild, when he, who has a right to choose of what trade and company he will be, thinks it not his interest to be a shoemaker? Nor can he or any body else imagine that this force, this punishment, is used to make him a good shoemaker, when it is seen and avowed that the punishments cease, and they are free from it who enter themselves of the company, whether they are really shoemakers, or in earnest apply themselves to be so or no. How much it differs from this, that the magistrate should punish men for not being of his church, who choose not to be of it, and when they are once entered into the communion of it are punished no more, though they are as ignorant, unskilful, and unpractised in the religion of it as before: how much, I say, this differs from the case I proposed, I leave you to consider. For after all your pretences of using force for the salvation of souls, and consequently to make men really Christians, you are fain to allow, and you give reasons for it, that force is used only to those who are out of your church: but whoever are once in it, are free from force, whether they be really Christians, and apply themselves to those things which are for the salvation of their souls, or no.

As to what you say, that whether they choose it or no, they ought to choose it; for your magistrate's religion is the true religion, that is the question between you and them: but be that as it will, if force be to be

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used in the case, I have proved that be the magistrate's religion true or false, he, whilst he believes it to be true, is under an obligation to use force, as if it were true.

But since you think your instance of children so weighty and pressing, give me leave to return you your question. I ask you then, are not parents as much authorized to teach their children their religion as they are to teach them their trade, when they have designed them to it? May they not as lawfully correct them to make them learn their catechism or the principles of their religion, as they may to make them learn Clenard's grammar? Or may they not use force to make them go to mass, or whatever they believe to be the worship of the true religion, as to go to school, or to learn any art or trade? If they may, as I think you will not deny, unless you will say that none but orthodox parents may teach their children any religion: if they may, I say then, pray tell me a reason, if your arguments from the discipline of children be good, why the magistrate may not use force to bring men to his religion, as well as parents may use force to instruct children, and bring them up in theirs? When you have considered this, you will perhaps find some difference between the state of children and grown men, betwixt those under tutelage, and those who are free and at their own disposal; and be inclined to think that those reasons which subject children in their nonage to the use of force, may not, nor do concern men at years of discretion.

You tell us farther, "that commonwealths are instituted for the attaining of all the benefits which political government can yield: and therefore if the spiritual and eternal interests of men may any way be procured or advanced by political government, the procuring and advancing those interests must in all reason be received amongst the ends of civil society, and so consequently fall within the compass of the magistrate's jurisdiction." Concerning the extent of the magistrate's jurisdiction, and the ends of civil society, whether the author or you have begged the question, which is the chief business of your 56th and two or three following pages, I shall leave it to the readers

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to judge, and bring the matter, if you please, to a shorter issue. The question is, whether the magistrate has any power to interpose force in matters of religion, or for the salvation of souls? The argument against it is, that civil societies are not constituted for that end, and the magistrate cannot use force for ends for which the commonwealth was not constituted.

The end of a commonwealth constituted can be supposed no other than what men in the constitution of, and entering into it, proposed; and that could be nothing but protection from such injuries from other men, which they desiring to avoid, nothing but force could prevent or remedy; all things but this being as well attainable by men living in neighbourhood without the bounds of a commonwealth, they could propose to themselves no other thing but this in quitting their natural liberty, and putting themselves under the umpirage of a civil sovereign, who therefore had the force of all the members of the commonwealth put into his hands to make his decrees to this end be obeyed. Now since no man or society of men can, by their opinions in religion or ways of worship, do any man who differed from them any injury, which he could not avoid or redress if he desired it, without the help of force; the punishing any opinion in religion or ways of worship by the force given the magistrate, could not be intended by those who constituted or entered into the commonwealth; and so could be no end of it, but quite the contrary. For force from a stronger hand, to bring a man to a religion which another thinks the true, being an injury which in the state of nature every one would avoid; protection from such injury is one of the ends of a commonwealth, and so every man has a right to toleration.

If you will say that commonwealths are not voluntary societies constituted by men, and by men freely entered into, I shall desire you to prove it.

In the mean time allowing it you for good, that commonwealths are constituted by God for ends which he has appointed, without the consent and contrivance of men: If you say that one of those ends is the pro-

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pagation of the true religion, and the salvation of men's souls; I shall desire you to show me any such end expressly appointed by God in revelation; which since, as you confess, you cannot do, you have recourse to the general law of nature; and what is that? The law of reason, whereby every one is commissioned to do good. And the propagating the true religion for the salvation of men's souls being doing good, you say, the civil sovereigns are commissioned and required by that law to use their force for those ends. But since by this law all civil sovereigns are commissioned and obliged alike to use their coactive power for the propagating the true religion, and the salvation of souls; and it is not possible for them to execute such a commission, or obey that law, but by using force to bring men to that religion which they judge the true; by which use of force much more harm than good would be done towards the propagating the true religion in the world, as I have showed elsewhere: therefore no such commission, whose execution would do more harm than good, more hinder than promote the end for which it is supposed given, can be a commission from God by the law of nature. And this I suppose may satisfy you about the end of civil societies or commonwealths, and answer what you say concerning the ends attainable by them.

But that you may not think the great position of yours, which is so often ushered in with doubtless, for which you imagine you have sufficient warrant in a misapplied school-maxim, is past over too slightly, and is not sufficiently answered, I shall give you that farther satisfaction.

You say, "civil societies are instituted for the attaining all the benefits which civil society or political government can yield;" and the reason you give for it, "because it has hitherto been universally acknowledged that no power is given in vain:" and therefore "if I except any of those benefits, I shall be obliged to admit that the power of attaining them was given in vain." And if I do admit it, no harm will follow in human affairs: or if I may borrow an elegant expression of yours out of the foregoing leaf, "the

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fortune of Europe does not turn upon it." In the voluntary institution and bestowing of power, there is no absurdity or inconvenience at all, that power, sufficient for several ends, should be limited by those that give the power only to one or some part of them. The power which a general commanding a potent army has, may be enough to take more towns than one from the enemy; or to suppress a domestic sedition; and yet the power of attaining those benefits, which is in his hand, will not authorize him to employ the force of the army therein, if he be commissioned only to besiege and take one certain place. So it is in a commonwealth. The power that is in the civil sovereign is the force of all the subjects of the commonwealth, which, supposing it sufficient for other ends than the preserving the members of the commonwealth in peace from injury and violence; yet if those who gave him that power limited the application of it to that sole end, no opinion of any other benefits attainable by it can authorize him to use it otherwise.

Our Saviour tells us expressly, that "all power was given him in heaven and earth," Matt. xxviii. 11. By which power I imagine you will not say, that the "spiritual and eternal interest" of those men whom you think need the help of political force, and of all other men too, could not any way be procured or advanced; and yet if you will hear him in another place, you will find this power, which, being all power, could certainly have wrought on all men, limited to a certain number: he says, "thou hast given him, [*i. e.* thy Son] power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him," John xvii. 2. Whether your universally acknowledged maxim of logic be true enough to authorize you to say that any part of this power was given him in vain, and to enable you to draw consequences from it, you were best see.

But were your maxim so true that it proved that since it might "indirectly and at a distance" do some service towards the "procuring or advancing the spiritual interest" of some few subjects of a commonwealth, therefore force was to be employed to that end; yet

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that will scarce make good this doctrine of yours: "doubtless, commonwealths are instituted for the attaining all those benefits which political government can yield; therefore if the spiritual and eternal interests of men may any way be procured or advanced by political government, the procuring and advancing those interests must in all reason be reckoned among the ends of civil societies, and so consequently fall within the compass of the magistrate's jurisdiction." For granting it true that "commonwealths are instituted for the attaining all those benefits which political government can yield," it does not follow "that the procuring and advancing the spiritual and eternal interest" of some few members of the commonwealth by an application of power, which indirectly and at a distance, or by accident, may do some service that way, whilst at the same time it prejudices a far greater number in their civil interests; can with reason be reckoned among the ends of civil society.

"That commonwealths are instituted for those ends, *viz.* for the procuring, preserving, and advancing men's civil interests, you say, No man will deny." To sacrifice therefore these civil interests of a great number of people, which are the allowed ends of the commonwealths, to the uncertain expectation of some service to be done indirectly and at a distance to a far less number, as experience has always showed those really converted to the true religion by force to be, if any at all; cannot be one of the ends of the commonwealth. Though the advancing of the spiritual and eternal interest be of infinite advantage to the persons who receive that benefit, yet if it can be thought a benefit to the commonwealth when it is procured them with the diminishing or destroying the civil interests of great numbers of their fellow-citizens; then the ravaging of an enemy, the plague, or a famine, may be said to bring a benefit to the commonwealth: for either of these may indirectly and at a distance do some service towards the advancing or procuring the spiritual and eternal interest of some of those who suffer in it.

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In the two latter paragraphs you except against my want of exactness, in setting down your opinion I am arguing against. Had it been any way to take off the force of what you say, or that the reader could have been misled by my words in any part of the question I was arguing against, you had had reason to complain: if not, you had done better to have entertained the reader with a clearer answer to my argument, than spent your ink and his time needlessly, to show such niceness.

My argument is as good against your tenet in your own words, as in mine which you except against: your words are "doubtless commonwealths are instituted for the attaining all the benefits which political government can yield; and therefore if the spiritual and eternal interest of men may any way be procured or advanced by political government, the procuring and advancing those interests must in all reason be reckoned amongst the ends of civil societies."

To which I answered, that if this be so, "Then this position must be true, viz. That all societies whatsoever are instituted for the attaining all the benefits that they may any way yield; there being nothing peculiar to civil society in the case, why that society should be instituted for the attaining all the benefits it can any way yield, and other societies not. By which argument it will follow, that all societies are instituted for one and the same end, *i. e.* for the attaining all the benefits that they can any way yield. By which account there will be no difference between church and state, a commonwealth and an army, or between a family and the East India Company; all which have hitherto been thought distinct sorts of societies, instituted for different ends. If your hypothesis hold good, one of the ends of the family must be to preach the Gospel, and administer the sacraments; and one business of an army to teach languages, and propagate religion; because these are benefits some way or other attianable by those societies: unless you take want of commission and authority

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to be a sufficient impediment: and that will be so in other cases." To which you reply, "Nor will it follow from hence, that all societies are instituted for one and the same end, (as you imagine it will) unless you suppose all societies enabled by the power they are endued with to attain the same end, which I believe no man hitherto did ever affirm. And therefore, notwithstanding this position, there may be still as great a difference as you please between church and state, a commonwealth and an army, or between a family and the East India Company: which several societies, as they are instituted for different ends, so are they likewise furnished with different powers proportionate to their respective ends." In which the reason you give to destroy my inference, I am to thank you for, if you understood the force of it, it being the very same I bring to show that my inference from your way of arguing is good. I say, that from your way of reasoning about the ends of government, "It would follow that all societies were instituted for one and the same end; unless you take want of commission and authority to be a sufficient impediment." And you tell me here it will not follow, "unless I suppose all societies enabled, by the power they are endued with, to attain the same end;" which in other words is, unless I suppose all who have in their hands the force of any society to have all of them the same commission.

The natural force of all the members of any society, or of those who by the society can be procured to assist it, is in one sense called the power of that society. This power or force is generally put into some one or few persons' hands with direction and authority how to use it; and this in another sense is called also the power of the society: and this is the power you here speak of, and in these following words, viz. "Several societies, as they are instituted for different ends; so likewise are they furnished with different powers proportionate to their respective ends." The power therefore of any society in this sense, is nothing but the authority and direction given to those that have the management of

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the force or natural power of the society, how and to what ends to use it, by which commission the ends of societies are known and distinguished. So that all societies wherein those who are intrusted with the management of the force or natural power of the society, have commission and authority to use the force or natural power of the society to attain the same benefits, are instituted for the same end. And therefore, if in all societies those who have the management of the force or natural power of the society, are commissioned or authorized to use that force to attain all the benefits attainable by it, all societies are instituted to the same end: and so what I said will still be true, viz. "That a family and an army, a commonwealth and a church, have all the same end. And if your hypothesis hold good, one of the ends of a family must be to preach the Gospel, and administer the sacraments; and one business of an army to teach languages, and propagate religion, because these are benefits some way or other attainable by those societies; unless you take want of commission and authority to be a sufficient impediment: and that will be so too in other cases." To which you have said nothing but what does confirm it, which you will a little better see, when you have considered that any benefit attainable by force or natural power of a society, does not prove the society to be instituted for that end; till you also show, that those to whom the management of the force of the society is intrusted, are commissioned to use it to that end.

And therefore to your next paragraph I shall think it answer enough to print here, side by side with it, that paragraph of mine to which you intended it as an answer.

L. II. p. 118. "It is a benefit to have true knowledge and philosophy embraced and assented to, in any civil society or government. But will you say, therefore, that it is a benefit to

L. III. p. 58. To your next paragraph, after what has already been said, I think it may suffice to say as fol-

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the society, or one of the ends of government, that all who are not peripatetics should be punished, to make men find out the truth, and profess it? This indeed might be thought a fit way to make some men embrace the peripatetic philosophy, but not a proper way to find the truth. For perhaps the peripatetic philosophy may not be true; perhaps a great many have not time nor parts to study it; perhaps a great many who have studied it, cannot be convinced of the truth of it: and therefore it cannot be a benefit to the commonwealth, nor one of the ends of it, that these members of the society should be disturbed and diseased to no purpose, when they are guilty of no fault. For just the same reason, it cannot be a benefit to civil society, that men should be punished in Denmark for not being Lutherans, in Geneva for not being Calvinists, and in Vienna for not being papists, as a means to make them find out the true religion. For so, upon your grounds, men must be treated in those places, as well as in England, for not being of the church of England. And then, I beseech you, consider the great benefit will accrue to men in society by this method; and I suppose it will be a hard thing for you to prove, That ever civil governments were instituted lows. Though perhaps the peripatetic philosophy may not be true, (and perhaps it is no great matter if it be not) yet the true religion is undoubtedly true. And though perhaps a great many have not time nor parts to study that philosophy, (and perhaps it may be no great matter neither if they have not) yet all that have the true religion duly tendered them, have time, and all, but idiots and madmen, have parts likewise to study it, as much as it is necessary for them to study it. And though perhaps a great many who have studied that philosophy cannot be convinced of the truth of it, (which perhaps is no great wonder) yet no man ever studied the true religion with such care and diligence as he might and ought to use, and with an honest mind, but he was convinced of the truth of it. And that

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to punish men for not being of this or that sect in religion; however by accident, indirectly and at a distance, it may be an occasion to one perhaps of a thousand, or an hundred, to study that controversy, which is all you expect from it. If it be a benefit, pray tell me what benefit it is. A civil benefit it cannot be. For men's civil interests are disturbed, injured, and impaired by it. And what spiritual benefit that can be to any multitude of men, to be punished for dissenting from a false or erroneous profession, I would have you find out; unless it be a spiritual benefit to be in danger to be driven into a wrong way. For if in all differing sects one is in the wrong, it is an hundred to one but that from which any one dissents, and is punished for dissenting from, is the wrong."

those who cannot otherwise be brought to do this, shall be a little disturbed and diseased to bring them to it, I take to be the interest, not only of those particular persons who by this means may be brought into the way of salvation, but of the commonwealth likewise, upon these two accounts.

1. Because the true religion, which this method propagates, makes good men; and good men are always the best subjects, or members of the commonwealth; not only as they do more sincerely and zealously promote the public good than other men; but likewise in regard of the favour of God, which they often procure to the societies of which they are members. And,

2. Because this care in any commonwealth, of God's honour and men's salvation, entitles it to his special protection and blessing. So that where this method is used, it proves both a spiritual and a civil benefit to the commonwealth.

You tell us, "the true religion is undoubtedly true." If you had told us too, who is undoubtedly judge of it, you had put all past doubt: but till you will be pleased to determine that, it would be undoubtedly true, that the king of Denmark is as undoubtedly judge of it as

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Copenhagen, and the emperor at Vienna, as the king of England in this island: I do not say they judge as right, but they are by as much right judges, and therefore have as much right to punish those who dissent from Lutheranism and popery in those countries, as any other civil magistrate has to punish any dissenters from the national religion any where else. And who can deny but these brians and thorns laid in their way by the penal laws of those countries, may do some service indirectly and at a distance, to bring men there severely and impartially to examine matters of religion, and so to embrace the truth that must save them, which the bare outward profession of any religion in the world will not do?

"This true religion, which is undoubtedly true, you tell us too, never any body studied with such care and diligence as he might and ought to use, and with an honest mind, but he was convinced of the truth of it."

If you will resolve it in your short circular way, and tell me such diligence as one ought to use is such diligence as brings one to be convinced, it is a question too easy to be asked. If I should desire to know plainly what is to be understood by it, it would be a question too hard for you to answer, and therefore I shall not trouble you with demanding what this diligence, which a man may and ought to use, is; nor what you mean by an honest mind. I only ask you, whether force, your way applied, be able to produce them? that so the commonwealth may have the benefits you propose from men's being convinced of, and consequently embracing, the true religion, which you say nobody can miss, who is brought to that diligence, and that honest mind.

The benefits to the commonwealth are; 1. "That the true religion that this method propagates makes good men, and good men are always the best subjects, and often procure the favour of God to the society they are members of." Being forward enough to grant that nothing contributes so much to the benefit of a society, as that it be made up of good men, I began

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presently to give into your method, which promises so sure a way to make men so study the true religion, that they cannot miss the being convinced of the truth of it, and so hardly avoid being really of the true religion, and consequently good men. But, that I might not mistake in a thing of that consequence, I began to look about in those countries where force has been made use of to propagate what you allowed to be the true religion, and found complaints of as great a scarcity of good men there, as in other places. A friend whom I discoursed on this point said, It might possibly be that the world had not yet had the benefit of your method: because law-makers had not yet been able to find that just temper of penalties on which your propagation of the true religion was built; and that therefore it was great pity you had not yet discovered this great secret, but it was to be hoped you would. Another, who stood by, said he did not see how your method could make men it wrought on, and brought to conformity, better than others, unless corrupt nature with impunity were like to produce better men in one outward profession than in another. To which I replied, That we did not look on conformists through a due medium; for if we did, with you, allow it presumable that all who conformed did it upon conviction, there could be no just complaint of the scarcity of good men: and so we got over that difficulty.

The second benefit you say your use of force brings to the commonwealth is, "That this care in any commonwealth, of God's honour and men's salvation, entitles it to his special protection and blessing."—Then certainly all commonwealths, that have any regard to the protection and blessing of God, will not neglect to entitle themselves to it, by using of force to promote that religion they believe to be true. But I beseech you what care is this of the honour of God and men's salvation you speak of? Is it, as you have owned it, a care by penalties to make men outwardly conform, and without any farther care or inquiry to presume that they do it upon conviction, and with a sincere embracing of, and

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obedience to the truth? But if the honour of God, and men's salvation, consists not in an outward conformity to any religion, but in something farther; what blessing they may expect whose care goes so far, and then presume the rest, which is the hardest part, and therefore least to be presumed, the prophet Jeremiah, chap. xlviii. 10, will tell you, who says, "Cursed be he that does the work of the Lord negligently:" which those who think it is the magistrate's business to use force to bring men heartily to embrace the truth that must save them, were best seriously to consider.

Your next paragraph containing nothing but positions of yours, which you suppose elsewhere proved, and I elsewhere examined, it is not fit the reader should be troubled any farther about them.

I once knew a gentleman, who having cracked himself with an ungovernable ambition, could never afterwards hear the place he aimed at mentioned without showing marks of his distemper. I know not what the matter is, that when there comes in your way but the mention of secular power in your or ecclesiastics' hands, you cannot contain yourself: we have instances of it in other parts of your letter; and here again you fall into a fit, which since it produces rather marks of your breeding, than arguments for your cause, I shall leave them as they are to the reader, if you can make them go down with him for reasons from a grave man, or for a sober answer to what I say in that and the following paragraph.

Much-what of the same size is your ingenious reply to what I say in the next paragraph, viz. "That commonwealths, or civil societies and governments, if you will believe the judicious Mr. Hooker, are, as St. Peter calls them, 1 Pet. ii. 13, ἀνθρωπίνη κτίσις, the contrivance and institution of man." To which you smartly reply, for your choler was up, "it is well for St. Peter that he had the judicious Mr. Hooker on his side." And it would have been well for you too to have seen that Mr. Hooker's authority was made use of not to confirm the authority of St. Peter, but to confirm

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that sense I gave of St. Peter's words, which is not so clear in our translation, but that there are those who, as I doubt not but you know, do not allow of it. But this being said when passion it seems rather employed your wit than your judgment, though nothing to the purpose, may yet perhaps indirectly and at a distance do some service.

And now, sir, if you can but imagine that men in the corrupt state of nature might be authorized and required by reason, the law of nature, to avoid the inconveniencies of that state, and to that purpose to put the power of governing them into some one or more men's hands, in such forms, and under such agreements as they should think fit; (which governors so set over them for a good end by their own choice, though they received all their power from those, who by the law of nature had a power to confer it on them, may very fitly be called powers ordained of God, being chosen and appointed by those who had authority from God so to do: for he that receives commission, limited according to the discretion of him that gives it, from another who had authority from his prince so to do, may truly be said, so far as his commission reaches, to be appointed or ordained by the prince himself;) it may serve as an answer to your two next paragraphs, and to show that there is no opposition or difficulty in all that St. Peter, St. Paul, or the judicious Mr. Hooker says; nor any thing, in what either of them says, to your purpose. And though it be true, those powers that are, are ordained of God; yet it may nevertheless be true, that the power any one has, and the ends for which he has it, may be by the contrivance and appointment of men.

To my saying, "the ends of commonwealths appointed by the institutors of them, could not be their spiritual and eternal interest, because they could not stipulate about those one with another, nor submit this interest to the power of the society, or any sovereign they should set over them." You reply, "very true, sir; but they can submit to be punished in

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their temporal interest, if they despise or neglect those greater interests." How they can submit to be punished by any men in their temporal interest, for that which they cannot submit to be judged by any man, when you can show, I shall admire your politics. Besides, if the compact about matters of religion be, that those should be punished in their temporal, who neglect or despise their eternal interest; who, I beseech you, is by this agreement rather to be punished, a sober dissenter, who appears concerned for religion and his salvation, or an irreligious, profane, or debauched conformist? By such as despise or neglect those greater interests, you here mean only dissenters from the national religion: for those only you punish, though you represent them under such a description as belongs not peculiarly to them; but that matters not, so long as it best suits your occasion.

In your next paragraph you wonder at my news from the West Indies; I suppose because you found it not in your books of Europe or Asia. But, whatever you may think, I assure you all the world is not Mile-end. But that you may be no more surprised with news, let me ask you, whether it be not possible that men, to whom the rivers and woods afforded the spontaneous provisions of life, and so, with no private possessions of land had no enlarged desires after riches or power; should live together in society, make one people of one language under one chieftain, who shall have no other power but to command them in time of common war against their common enemies, without any municipal laws, judges, or any person with superiority established amongst them, but ended all their private differences, if any arose, by the extemporary determination of their neighbours, or of arbitrators chosen by the parties; I ask you, whether in such a commonwealth the chieftain, who was the only man of authority amongst them, had any power to use the force of the commonwealth to any other end but the defence of it against an enemy, though other benefits were attainable by it?

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The paragraph of mine to which you mean your next for an answer, shall answer for itself.

L. II. p. 128. "You quote the author's argument, which he brings to prove that the care of souls is not committed to the magistrate, in these words: 'It is not committed to him by God, because it appears not that God has ever given any such authority to one man over another, as to compel any one to his religion.' This, when first I read it, I confess I thought a good argument. But you say, 'this is quite beside the business;' and the reason you give is, 'for the authority of the magistrate is not authority to compel any one to his religion, but only an authority to procure all his subjects the means of discovering the way of salvation, and to procure withal, as much as in him lies, that none remain ignorant of it,' &c. I fear, sir, you forget yourself. The author was not writing against your new hypothesis before it was known in the world. He may be excused, if he had not the gift of prophecy, to argue against a notion which was not yet started. He had in view only the laws hitherto made, and the punishments, in matters of religion, in use in the world. The penalties, as I take it, are laid on men for being of different ways of religion: which, what is it other but to compel them to relinquish their own, and to conform themselves to that from which they differ?

L. III. p. 68. As to your next paragraph, I think I might now wholly pass it over. I shall only tell you, that as I have often heard, so I hope I shall always hear of "religion established by law." For though the magistrate's authority can "add no force or sanction to any religion, whether true or false, nor any thing to the truth or validity of his own, or any religion whatsoever;" yet I think it may do much toward the upholding and preserving the true religion within his jurisdiction; and in that respect may properly enough be said to establish it.

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If this be not to compel them to the magistrate's religion, pray tell us what is? This must be necessarily so understood; unless it can be supposed that the law intends not to have that done, which with penalties it commands to be done; or that punishments are not compulsion, not that compulsion the author complains of. The law says, Do this, and live; embrace this doctrine, conform to this way of worship, and be at ease and free; or else be fined, imprisoned, banished, burned. If you can show among the laws that have been made in England concerning religion (and I think I may say any where else), any one that punishes men 'for not having impartially examined the religion they have embraced or refused,' I think I may yield you the cause. Law-makers have been generally wiser than to make laws that could not be executed: and therefore their laws were against non-conformists, which could be known; and not for impartial examination, which could not. It was not, then, beside the author's business to bring an argument against the persecutions here in fashion. He did not know that any one, who was so free as to acknowledge that the magistrate has not an authority to compel any one to his religion, and thereby at once, as you have done, give up all the laws now in force against the dissenters; had yet rods in store for them, and by a new trick would bring them under the lash of the law, when the old pretences were too much exploded to serve any longer. Have you never heard of such a thing as the religion established by law? which is, it seems, the lawful religion of a country, and to be complied with as such. There being such things, such notions yet in the world, it was not quite beside the author's business to allege, that God never gave such authority to one man over another as to compel any one to his religion. I will grant, if you please, religion established by law is a pretty odd way of speaking in the mouth of a Christian, and yet it is much in fashion; as if the magistrate's authority could add any force or sanction to any religion, whether true or false. I am glad to find you have so far considered

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the magistrate's authority, that you agree with the author, that he hath none to compel men to his religion. Much less can he, by any establishment of law, add any thing to the truth or validity of his own, or any religion whatsoever."

That above annexed is all the answer you think this paragraph of mine deserves. But yet in that little you say, you must give me leave to take notice, that if, as you say, "the magistrate's authority may do much towards the upholding and preserving the true religion within his jurisdiction;" so also may it do much towards the upholding and preserving of a false religion, and in that respect, if you say true, may be said to establish it. For I think I need not mind you here again, that it must unavoidably depend upon his opinion what shall be established for true, or rejected as false.

And thus you have my thoughts concerning the most material of what you say touching the magistrate's commission to use force in matters of religion, together with some incident places in your answer, which I have taken notice of as they have come in my way.

CHAPTER III.

Who are to be punished by your Scheme.

To justify the largeness of the author's toleration, who would not have Jews, Mahometans, and pagans excluded from the civil rights of the commonwealth, because of their religion; I said, "I feared it will hardly be believed, that we pray in earnest for their conversion, if we exclude them from the ordinary and profitable means of it, either by driving them from, or persecuting them when they are amongst us." You reply: "now I confess I thought men might live

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quietly enough among us, and enjoy the protection of the government against all violence and injuries, without being endenizened, or made members of the commonwealth; which alone can entitle them to the civil rights and privileges of it. But as to Jews, Mahometans, and pagans, if any of them do not care to live among us, unless they may be admitted to the rights and privileges of the commonwealth; the refusing them that favour is not, I suppose, to be looked upon as driving them from us, or excluding them from the ordinary and probable means of conversion; but as a just and necessary caution in a Christian commonwealth, in respect to the members of it; who, if such as profess Judaism, or Mahometanism, or paganism, were permitted to enjoy the same rights with them, would be much the more in danger to be seduced by them; seeing they would lose no worldly advantage by such a change of their religion: whereas, if they could not turn to any of those religions, without forfeiting the civil rights of the commonwealth by doing it, it is likely they would consider well before they did it, what ground there was to expect that they should get any thing by the exchange, which would countervail the loss they should sustain by it." I thought protection and impunity of men, not offending in civil things, might have been accounted the civil rights of the commonwealth, which the author meant: but you, to make it seem more, add the word privileges. Let it be so. Live amongst you then Jews, Mahometans, and pagans may; but endenizened they must not be. But why? Are there not those who are members of your commonwealth, who do not embrace the truth that must save them, any more than they? What think you of Socinians, papists, anabaptists, quakers, presbyterians? If they do not reject the truth necessary to salvation, why do you punish them? Or if some that are in the way to perdition may be members of the commonwealth, why must these be excluded upon the account of religion? For I think there is no great odds, as to saving of souls, which is the only end for which they are punished, amongst those religions, each whereof will

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make those who are of it miss salvation. Only if there be any fear of seducing those who are of the national church, the danger is most from that religion which comes nearest to it, and most resembles it. However, this you think "but a just and necessary caution in a Christian commonwealth, in respect of the members of it." I suppose, for you love to speak doubtfully, these members of a Christian commonwealth you take such care of, are members also of the national church, whose religion is the true; and therefore you call them, in the next paragraph, subjects of Christ's kingdom, to whom he has a special regard. For dissenters, who are punished to be made good Christians, to whom force is used "to bring them to the true religion, and to the communion of the church of God," it is plain are not in your opinion good Christians, or of the true religion; unless you punish them to make them what they are already. The dissenters, therefore, who are already perverted, and reject the truth that must save them, you are not, I suppose, so careful of, lest they should be seduced. Those who have already the plague, need not be guarded from infection: nor can you fear that men so desperately perverse, that penalties and punishments, joined to the light and strength of the truth, have not been able to bring from the opinions they have espoused into the communion of the church, should be seduced to Judaism, Mahometanism, or paganism, neither of which has the advantage of truth or interest to prevail by. It is therefore those of the national church, as I conclude also from the close of this paragraph, where you speak of God's own peculiar people, whom you think would be much the more in danger to be seduced by them, if they were endenizened, since they would lose no worldly advantage by such a change of their religion, *i. e.* by quitting the national church, to turn Jews, Mahometans, or pagans.

This shows, whatever you say of the sufficient means of instruction provided by the law, how well you think the members of the national church are instructed in the true religion. It shows also, whatever you say of its being presumable that they embrace it upon con-

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viction, how much you are satisfied that the members of the national church are convinced of the truth of the religion they profess, or rather herd with; since you think them in great danger to change it for Judaism, Mahometanism, or paganism itself upon equal terms, and because they shall lose no worldly advantage by such a change. But if the forfeiting the civil rights of the commonwealth be the proper remedy to keep men in the communion of the church, why is it used to keep men from Judaism or paganism, and not from fanaticism? Upon this account why might not Jews, pagans, and Mahometans be admitted to the rights of the commonwealth, as far as papists, independents, and quakers? But you distribute to every one according to your good pleasure; and doubtless are fully justified by these following words: "And whether this be not a reasonable and necessary caution, any man may judge, who does but consider within how few ages after the flood, superstition and idolatry prevailed over the world, and how apt even God's own peculiar people were to receive that mortal infection, notwithstanding all that he did to keep them from it."

What the state of religion was in the first ages after the flood, is so imperfectly known now, that, as I have showed you in another place, you can make little advantage to your cause from thence. And since it was the same corruption then, which, as you own, withdraws men now from the true religion, and hinders it from prevailing by its own light, without the assistance of force; and it is the same corruption that keeps dissenters, as well as Jews, Mahometans, and pagans, from embracing of the truth: why different degrees of punishments should be used to them, till there be found in them different degrees of obstinacy, would need some better reason. Why this common pravity of human nature should make Judaism, Mahometanism, or paganism more catching than any sort of non-conformity, which hinders men from embracing the true religion; so that Jews, Mahometans, and pagans must, for fear of infecting others, be shut out from the commonwealth, when others are not, I would fain know? Whatever it

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was that so disposed the Jews to idolatry before the captivity, sure it is, they firmly resisted it, and refused to change, not only where they might have done it on equal terms, but have had great advantage to boot; and therefore it is possible that there is something in this matter, which neither you nor I do fully comprehend, and may with a becoming humility sit down and confess, that in this, as well as other parts of his providence, God's ways are past finding out. But of this we may be certain, from this instance of the Jews, that it is not reasonable to conclude, that because they were once inclined to idolatry, that therefore they, or any other people, are in danger to turn pagans, whenever they shall lose no worldly advantage by such a change. But if we may oppose nearer and known instances to more remote and uncertain, look into the world, and tell me, since Jesus Christ brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel, where the Christian religion meeting Judaism, Mahometanism, or paganism upon equal terms, lost so plainly by it, that you have reason to suspect the members of a Christian commonwealth would be in danger to be seduced to either of them, if they should lose no worldly advantage by such a change of their religion, rather than likely to increase among them? Till you can find, then, some better reason for excluding Jews, &c. from the rights of the commonwealth, you must give us leave to look on this as a bare pretence. Besides, I think you are under a mistake, which shows your pretence against admitting Jews, Mahometans, and pagans to the civil rights of the commonwealth, is ill grounded; for what law, I pray, is there in England, that they who turn to any of those religions forfeit the civil rights of the commonwealth by doing it? Such a law I desire you to show me; and if you cannot, all this pretence is out of doors, and men of your church, since on that account they would lose no worldly advantage by the change, are in as much danger to be seduced, whether Jews, Mahometans, and pagans are endenizened or no.

But that you may not be thought too gracious, you tell us, "That as to pagans particularly, you are so far

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from thinking that they ought not to be excluded from the civil rights of the commonwealth, because of their religion, that you cannot see how their religion can be suffered by any commonwealth that knows and worships the only true God, if they would be thought to retain any jealousy for his honour, or even for that of human nature." Thus then you order the matter; Jews and Mahometans may be permitted to live in a Christian commonwealth with the exercise of their religion, but not be endenizened: pagans may also be permitted to live there, but not to have the exercise of their religion, nor be endenizened.

This, according to the best of my apprehension, is the sense of your words; for the clearness of your thoughts, or your cause, does not always suffer you to speak plainly and directly; as here, having been speaking a whole page before what usage the persons of Jews, Mahometans, and pagans were to have, you on a sudden tell us their religion is not to be suffered, but say not what must be done with their persons. For do you think it reasonable that men, who have any religion, should live amongst you without the exercise of that religion, in order to their conversion? which is no other but to make them downright irreligious, and render the very notion of a Deity insignificant, and of no influence to them, in order to their conversion. It being less dangerous to religion in general to have men ignorant of a Deity, and so without any religion, than to have them acknowledge a superior Being, but yet to teach or allow them to neglect or refuse worshipping him in that way that they believe he requires, to render them acceptable to him: it being a great deal less fault (and that which we were every one of us once guilty of) to be ignorant of him, than, acknowledging a God, not to pay him the honour which we think due to him. I do not see therefore how those who retain any jealousy for the honour of God can permit men to live amongst them in order to their conversion, and require of them not to honour God, according to the best of their knowledge: unless you think it a preparation to your true religion, to require men sensibly and knowingly to af-

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from the Deity; and to persuade them that the religion you would bring them to can allow men to make bold with the sense they have of him, and to refuse him the honour which in their consciences they are persuaded is due to him, and which must to them and every body else appear inconsistent with all religion. Since therefore to admit their persons without the exercise of their religion cannot be reasonable, nor conducing to their conversion; if the exercise of their religion, as you say, be not to be suffered amongst us till they are converted, I do not see how their persons can be suffered amongst us, if that exception must be added, till they are converted; and whether then they are not excluded from the ordinary means of conversion, I leave you to consider.

I wonder this necessity had not made you think on another way of their having the ordinary means of conversion, without their living amongst us, that way by which in the beginning of Christianity it was brought to the heathen world by the travels and preaching of the apostles. But the successors of the apostles are not, it seems, successors to this part of the commission, Go and teach all nations. And indeed it is one thing to be an ambassador from God to people that are already converted, and have provided good benefices; another to be an ambassador from Heaven in a country where you have neither the countenance of the magistrate, nor the devout obedience of the people. And who sees not how one is bound to be zealous for the propagating of the true religion, and the convincing, converting, and saving of souls in a country where it is established by law? who can doubt but that there those who talk so much of it are in earnest? Though yet some men will hardly forbear doubting, that those men, however they pray for it, are not much concerned for the conversion of pagans, who will neither go to them to instruct them, nor suffer them to come to us for the means of conversion.

It is true what you say, "what pagans call religion is abomination to the Almighty." But if that requires any thing from those who retain any jealousy for the

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honour of God, it is something more than barely about the place where those abominations shall be committed. The true concern for the honour of God is not, that idolatry should be shut out of England, but that it should be lessened every where, and by the light and preaching of the Gospel be banished out of the world. If pagans and idolaters are, as you say, the "greatest dishonour conceivable to God Almighty," they are as much so on the other side of Tweed, or the sea, as on this; for he from his throne equally beholds all the dwellers upon earth. Those therefore who are truly jealous for the honour of God, will not, upon the account of his honour, be concerned for their being in this or that place, while there are idolaters in the world; but that the number of those who are such a dishonour to him, should every day be as much as possible diminished, and they be brought to give him his due tribute of honour and praise in a right way of worship. It is in this that a jealousy, which is in earnest for God's honour, truly shows itself, in wishing and endeavouring to abate the abomination, and drive idolatry out of the world; not in driving idolaters out of any one country, or sending them away to places and company, where they shall find more encouragement to it. It is a strange jealousy for the honour of God, that looks not beyond such a mountain or river as divides a Christian and pagan country. Wherever idolatry is committed, there God's honour is concerned; and thither men's jealousy for his honour, if it be sincere indeed, will extend, and be in pain to lessen and take away the provocation. But the place God is provoked and dishonoured in, which is a narrow consideration in respect of the Lord of all the earth, will no otherwise employ their zeal, who are in earnest, than as it may more or less conduce to their conversion of the offenders.

But if your jealousy for the honour of God engages you so far against men's committing idolatry in certain places, that you think those ought to be excluded from the rights of the commonwealth, and not to be suffered to be denizens, who, according to that place in the Romans brought by you, are "without excuse, because

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when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, but became vain in their imagination, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man." I shall only change some of the words in the text you cite of Isaiah, "I have baked part thereof on the coals, and eaten it, and shall I make the residue thereof a God? shall I fall down to that which comes of a plant?" and so leave them with you to consider whether your jealousy in earnest carries you so far as you talk of; and whether when you have looked about you, you are still of the mind, that those who do such things shall be disfranchised and sent away, and the exercise of no such religion be any where permitted amongst us? for those things are no less an abomination to God under a Christian than a pagan name. One word more I have to say to your jealousy for the honour of God, that if it be any thing more than in talk, it will set itself no less earnestly against other abominations, and the practisers of them, than against that of idolatry.

As to that in Job xxxi. 26, 27, 28, where he says "idolatry is to be punished by the judge;" this place alone, were there no other, is sufficient to confirm their opinion, who conclude that book writ by a Jew. And how little the punishing of idolatry in that commonwealth concerns our present case, I refer you for information to the author's letter. But how does your jealousy for the honour of God carry you to an exclusion of the pagan religion from amongst you, but yet admit of the Jewish and Mahometan? Or is not the honour of God concerned in their denying our Saviour?

If we are to look upon Job to have been writ before the time of Moses, as the author would have it, p. 32, and so by a stranger to the commonwealth of Israel; it is plain the general apostasy he lays so much stress on, was not spread so far, but that there was a government by his own confession established out of Judea, free from, nay zealous against idolatry: and why there might not be many more as well as this, which we hear of but by chance, it will concern him to show.

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You go on, "But as to the converting Jews, Mahometans, and pagans to Christianity, I fear there will be no great progress made in it, till Christians come to a better agreement and union among themselves. I am sure our Saviour prayed that all that should believe in him might be one in the Father and him," (*i. e.* I suppose in that holy religion which he taught them from the Father) that the world might believe that the Father had sent him: "and therefore when he comes to make inquisition, why no more Jews, Mahometans, and pagans have been converted to his religion; I very much fear, that a great part of the blame will be found to lie upon the authors and promoters of sects and divisions among the professors of it: which therefore, I think, all that are guilty, and all that would not be guilty, ought well to consider."

I easily grant that "our Saviour prayed that all might be one in that holy religion which he taught them," and in that very prayer teaches what that religion is, "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." John xvii. 3. But must it be expected, that therefore they should all be of one mind in things not necessary to salvation? for whatever unity it was our Saviour prayed for here, it is certain the apostles themselves did not all of them agree in every thing: but even the chief of them have had differences amongst them in matters of religion, as appears, Gal. ii. 11.

An agreement in truths necessary to salvation, and the maintaining of charity and brotherly kindness with the diversity of opinions in other things, is that which will very well consist with Christian unity, and is all possibly to be had in this world, in such an incurable weakness and difference of men's understandings. This probably would contribute more to the conversion of Jews, Mahometans, and pagans, if there were proposed to them and others, for their admittance into the church, only the plain simple truths of the Gospel necessary to salvation, than all the fruitless pudder and talk about uniting Christians in matters of less moment, accord-

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ing to the draught and prescription of a certain set of men any where.

"What blame will lie on the authors and promoters of sects and divisions," and, let me add, animosities amongst Christians, "when Christ comes to make inquisition why no more Jews, Mahometans, and pagans were converted, they who are concerned ought certainly well to consider." And to abate in great measure this mischief for the future, they who talk so much of sects and divisions, would do well to consider too, whether those are not most authors and promoters of sects and divisions, who impose creeds, and ceremonies, and articles of men's making; and make things not necessary to salvation, the necessary terms of communion, excluding and driving from them such as out of conscience and persuasion cannot assent and submit to them; and treating them as if they were utter aliens from the church of God, and such as were deservedly shut out as unfit to be members of it: who narrow Christianity within bounds of their own making, which the Gospel knows nothing of; and often, for things by themselves confessed indifferent, thrust men out of their communion, and then punish them for not being of it.

Who sees not, but the bond of unity might be preserved, in the different persuasions of men, concerning things not necessary to salvation, if they were not made necessary to church communion? What two thinking men of the church of England are there, who differ not one from the other in several material points of religion, who nevertheless are members of the same church, and in unity one with another? Make but one of those points the Shibboleth of a party, and erect it into an article of the national church, and they are presently divided; and he of the two, whose judgment happens not to agree with national orthodoxy, is immediately cut off from communion. Who I beseech you is it in this case that makes the sect? Is it not those who contract the church of Christ within limits of their own contrivance? who, by articles and ceremonies of their own forming, separate from their communion all that have not persuasions which just jump with their model?

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It is frivolous here to pretend authority. No man has or can have authority to shut any one out of the church of Christ, for that for which Christ himself will not shut him out of heaven. Whosoever does so, is truly the author and promoter of schism and division, sets up a sect, and tears in pieces the church of Christ, of which every one who believes, and practises what is necessary to salvation, is a part and member; and cannot, without the guilt of schism, be separated from, or kept out of its external communion. In this "lording it over the heritage of God,' 1 Pet. v. 2, 3, and thus overseeing by imposition on the unwilling, and not consenting, (which seems to be the meaning of St. Peter) most of the lasting sects which so mangle Christianity had their original, and continue to have their support: and were it not for these established sects under the specious names of national churches, which, by their contracted and arbitrary limits of communion, justify against themselves the separation and like narrowness of others; the difference of opinions which do not so much begin to be, as to appear and be owned under toleration, would either make no sect nor division; or else, if they were so extravagant as to be opposite to what is necessary to salvation, and so necessitate a separation; the clear light of the Gospel, joined with a strict discipline of manners, would quickly chase them out of the world. But whilst needless impositions and moot points in divinity are established by the penal laws of kingdoms, and the specious pretences of authority; what hope is there, that there should be such an union amongst Christians any where, as might invite a rational Turk or infidel to embrace a religion, whereof he is told they have a revelation from God, which yet in some places he is not suffered to read, and in no place shall he be permitted to understand for himself, or to follow according to the best of his understanding, when it shall at all thwart (though in things confessed not necessary to salvation) any of those select points of doctrine, discipline, or outward worship, whereof the national church has been pleased to make up its articles, polity, and ceremonies? And I ask, what a sober sensible heathen

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must think of the divisions amongst Christians not owing to toleration, if he should find in an island, where Christianity seems to be in its greatest purity, the south and north parts establishing churches upon the differences of only whether fewer or more, thus and thus chosen, should govern; though the revelation they both pretend to be their rule, say nothing directly one way or the other: each contending with so much eagerness, that they deny each other to be churches of Christ, that is, in effect, to be true Christians? To which, if one should add transubstantiation, consubstantiation, real presence, articles and distinctions set up by men without authority from Scripture; and other less differences, which good Christians may dissent about without endangering their salvation, established by law in the several parts of Christendom: I ask, whether the magistrates' interposing in matters of religion, and establishing national churches by the force and penalties of civil laws, with their distinct (and at home reputed necessary) confessions and ceremonies, do not by law and power authorize and perpetuate sects among Christians, to the great prejudice of Christianity, and scandal to infidels, more than any thing that can arise from a mutual toleration, with charity and a good life?

Those who have so much in their mouths, "the authors of sects and divisions," with so little advantage to their cause, I shall desire to consider, whether national churches, established as now they are, are not as much sects and divisions in Christianity, as smaller collections, under the name of distinct churches, are in respect of the national? Only with this difference, that these subdivisions and discountenanced sects, wanting power to enforce their peculiar doctrines and discipline, usually live more friendly like Christians, and seem only to demand Christian liberty; whereby there is less appearance of unchristian division among them; whereas those national sects, being backed by the civil power, which they never fail to make use of, at least as a pretence of authority over their brethren, usually breathe out nothing but force and persecution, to the great reproach, shame, and dishonour of the Christian religion.

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I said, "that if the magistrates would severely and impartially set themselves against vice in whomsoever it is found, and leave men to their own consciences in their articles of faith and ways of worship, true religion would spread wider, and be more fruitful in the lives of its professors than ever hitherto it has done by the imposing of creeds and ceremonies." Here I call only immorality of manners vice: you, on the contrary, in your answer, give the name of vice to errors in opinion, and difference in ways of worship from the national church; for this is the matter in question between us, express it as you please. This being a contest only about the signification of a short syllable in the English tongue, we must leave to the masters of that language to judge which of these two is the proper use of it. But yet, from my using the word vice, you conclude presently, taking it in your sense, not mine, that the magistrate has a power in England, for England we are speaking of, to punish dissenters from the national religion, because it is a vice. I will, if you please, in what I said, change the word vice into that I meant by it, and say thus: if the magistrates will severely and impartially set themselves against the dishonesty and debauchery of men's lives, and such immoralities as I contra-distinguish from errors in speculative opinions of religion and ways of worship: and then pray see how your answer will look, for thus it runs: "It seems, then, with you, the rejecting the true religion, and refusing to worship God in decent ways prescribed by those to whom God has left the ordering of those matters, are not comprehended in the name vice." But you tell me, "If I except these things, and will not allow them to be called by the name of vice, perhaps other men may think it as reasonable to except some other things (*i. e.* from being called vices) which they have a kindness for: for instance, some may perhaps except arbitrary divorce, polygamy, concubinage, simple fornication, or marrying within degrees thought forbidden." Let them except these, and, if you will, drunkenness, theft, and murder too, from the name of vice; nay, call them virtues: will

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they, by their calling them so, be exempt from the magistrate's power of punishing them? Or can they claim an impunity by what I have said? Will these immoralities, by the names any one shall give, or forbear to give them, "become articles of faith, or ways of worship?" Which is all, as I expressly say in the words you here cite of mine, that I would have the magistrates leave men to their own consciences in. But, sir, you have, for me, liberty of conscience to use words in what sense you please; only I think, where another is concerned, it savours more of ingenuity and love of truth, rather to mind the sense of him that speaks, than to make a dust and noise with a mistaken word, if any such advantage were given you.

You say, "that some men would, through carelessness, never acquaint themselves with the truths which must save them, without being forced to do it, which (you suppose) may be very true, notwithstanding that (as I say) some are called at the third hour, some at the ninth, and some at the eleventh hour; and, whenever they are called, they embrace all the truths necessary to salvation. At least I do not show why it may not: and therefore this may be no slip, for any thing I have said to prove it to be one." This I take not to be an answer to my argument, which was, that, since some are not called till the eleventh hour, nobody can know who those are, "who would never acquaint themselves with those truths that must save them, without force," which is therefore necessary, and may, indirectly and at a distance, do them some service. Whether that was my argument or no, I leave the reader to judge; but that you may not mistake it now again, I tell you here it is so, and needs another answer.

Your way of using punishments, in short, is this, that all that conform not to the national church, where it is true, as in England, should be punished: what for? "to make them consider." This I told you had something of impracticable. To which you reply, that you used the word only in another sense, which I mistook. Whether I mistook your meaning in the use of that word or no, or whether it was natural so to take it, or

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whether that opinion which I charged on you by that mistake, when you tell us, "that not examining is indeed the next end for which they are punished," be not your opinion, let us leave to the reader; for, when you have that word in what sense you please, what I said will be nevertheless true, viz. "That to punish dissenters, as dissenters, to make them consider, has something impracticable in it, unless not to be of the national religion, and not to consider, be the same thing." These words you answer nothing to, having, as you thought, a great advantage of talking about my mistake of your word only. But unless you will suppose not to be of the national church, and not to consider, be the same thing, it will follow, that to punish dissenters, as dissenters, to make them consider, has something of impracticable in it.

The law punishes all dissenters: for what? To make them all conform, that is evident: to what end? To make them all consider, say you: that cannot be, for it says nothing of it; nor is it certain that all dissenters have not considered; nor is there any care taken by the law to inquire whether they have considered, when they do conform; yet this was the end intended by the magistrate. So, then, with you it is practicable and allowable, in making laws, for the legislator to lay punishments by law on men, for an end which they may be ignorant of, for he says nothing of it; on men, whom he never takes care to inquire whether they have done it or no, before he relax the punishment, which had no other next end but to make them do it. But though he says nothing of considering, in laying on the penalties, nor asks any thing about it when he takes them off, yet every body must understand that he so meant it. Sir, Sancho Pancha, in the government of his island, did not expect that men should understand his meaning by his gaping; but in another island it seems, if you had the management, you would not think it to have any thing of impracticable or impolitic in it: for how far the provision of means of instruction takes this off, we shall see in another place. And, lastly, to lay punishments on men for an end which is already at-

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tained, for some among the dissenters may have considered, is what other law-makers look on as impracticable, or at least unjust. But to this you answer, in your usual way of circle, That "if" I "suppose you are for punishing dissenters whether they consider or no," I "am in a great mistake; for the dissenters (which is my word, not yours) whom" you "are for punishing, are only such as reject the true religion proposed to them, with reasons and arguments sufficient to convince them of the truth of it, who therefore can never be supposed to consider those reasons and arguments as they ought, whilst they persist in rejecting that religion, or (in my language) continue dissenters; for, if they did so consider them, they would not continue dissenters." Of the fault for which men were to be punished, distinguished from the end for which they were to be punished, we heard nothing, as I remember, in the first draught of your scheme, which we had in "the argument considered," &c. But I doubt not but in your general terms you will be able to find it, or what else you please: for now having spoken out, that men who are of a different religion from the true, which has been tendered them with sufficient evidence, (and who are they whom the wise and benign Disposer and Governor of all things has not furnished with competent means of salvation) are criminal, and are by the magistrate to be punished as such, it is necessary your scheme should be completed; and whither that will carry you it is easy to see.

But pray, sir, are there no conformists that so reject the true religion? and would you have them punished, too, as you here profess? Make that practicable by your scheme, and you have done something to persuade us that your end in earnest, in the use of force, is to make men consider, understand, and be of the true religion; and that the rejecting the true religion, tendered with sufficient evidence, is the crime which *bonâ fide* you would have punished; and, till you do this, all that you may say concerning punishing men "to make them consider as they ought, to make them receive the true

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religion, to make them embrace the truth that must save them," &c. will, with all sober, judicious, and unbiassed readers, pass only for the mark of great zeal, if it scape amongst men as warm and as sagacious as you are, a harsher name; whilst those conformists, who neglect matters of religion, who reject the saving truths of the Gospel, as visibly and as certainly as any dissenters, have yet no penalties laid upon them.

You talk much "of considering and not considering as one ought; of embracing and rejecting the true religion," and abundance more to this purpose; which all, however very good and savoury words, that look very well, when you come to the application of force to procure that end expressed in them, amount to no more but conformity and non-conformity. If you see not this, I pity you; for I would fain think you a fair man, who means well, though you have not lit upon the right way to the end you propose: but if you see it, and persist in your use of these good expressions to lead men into a mistake in this matter; consider what my pagans and Mahometans could do worse to serve a bad cause.

Whatever you may imagine, I write so in this argument, as I have before my eyes the account I shall one day render for my intention and regard to truth in the management of it. I look on myself as liable to error as others; but this I am sure of, I would neither impose on you, myself, nor any body; and should be very glad to have the truth in this point clearly established; and therefore it is, I desire you again to examine, whether all the ends you name to be intended by your use of force, do in effect, when force is to be your way put in practice, reach any farther than bare outward conformity? Pray consider whether it be not that which makes you so shy of the term dissenters, which you tell me is mine, not your word. Since none are, by your scheme, to be punished, but those who do not conform to the national religion, dissenters, I think, is the proper name to call them by; and I can see no reason you have to boggle at it, unless your opinion has something in it you are unwilling should

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be spoke out, and called by its right name: but, whether you like it or no, persecution and persecution of dissenters are names that belong to it as it stands now.

And now I think I may leave you your question, wherein you ask, "But cannot dissenters be punished for not being of the national religion, as the fault, and yet only to make them consider, as the end for which they are punished?" to be answered by yourself, or to be used again, where you think there is any need of so nice a distinction, as between the fault for which men are punished by laws, and the end for which they are punished. For to me I confess it is hard to find any other immediate end of punishment in the intention of human laws but the amendment of the fault punished; though it may be subordinate to other and remoter ends. If the law be only to punish non-conformity, one may truly say, to cure that fault, or to produce conformity, is the end of that law; and there is nothing else immediately aimed at by that law but conformity; and whatever else it tends to as an end must be only as a consequence of conformity, whether it be edification, increase of charity, or saving of souls, or whatever else may be thought a consequence of conformity. So that in a law, which with penalties requires conformity, and nothing else, one cannot say, properly I think, that consideration is the end of that law; unless consideration be a consequence of conformity, to which conformity is subordinate, and does naturally conduce, or else is necessary to it.

To my arguing that it is unjust as well as impracticable, you reply, "Where the national church is the true church of God, to which all men ought to join themselves, and sufficient evidence is offered to convince men that it is so: there it is a fault to be out of the national church, because it is a fault not to be convinced that the national church is that true church of God. And therefore since there men's not being so convinced can only be imputed to their not considering as they ought the evidence which is offered to convince them, it cannot be unjust to punish them

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to make them so to consider it." Pray tell me, which is a man's duty, to be of the national church first; or to be convinced first that its religion is true, and then to be of it? If it be his duty to be convinced first, why then do you punish him for not being of it, when it is his duty to be convinced of the truth of its religion before it is his duty to be of it? If you say it is his duty to be of it first, why then is not force used to him afterwards, though he be still ignorant and unconvinced? But you answer, "It is his fault not to be convinced." What, every one's fault every where? No, you limit it to places where "sufficient evidence is offered to convince men that the national church is the true church of God." To which pray let me add, the national church is so the true church of God, that nobody out of its communion can embrace the truth that must save him, or be in the way to salvation. For if a man may be in the way to salvation out of the national church, he is enough in the true church, and needs no force to bring him into any other: for when a man is in the way to salvation, there is no necessity of force to bring him into any church of any denomination in order to his salvation. So that not to be of the national church, though true, will not be a fault which the magistrate has a right to punish, until sufficient evidence is offered to prove that a man cannot be saved out of it. Now since you tell us that by sufficient evidence you mean such as will certainly win assent, when you have offered such evidence to convince men that the national church, any where, is so the true church that men cannot be saved out of its communion, I think I may allow them to be so faulty as to deserve what punishment you shall think fit. If you hope to mend the matter by the following words, where you say, that where such "evidence is offered, there men's not being convinced can only be imputed to men's not considering as they ought," they will not help you. For "to consider as they ought" being, by your own interpretation, "to consider so as not to reject;" then your answer amounts to just thus much, "That it is a fault not to be convinced that the national

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church is the true church of God, where sufficient evidence is offered to convince men that it is so. Sufficient evidence is such as will certainly gain assent with those who consider as they ought, *i. e.* who consider so as not to reject, or to be moved heartily to embrace," which I think is to be convinced. Who can have the heart now to deny any of this? Can there be any thing surer, than that men's not being convinced, is to be imputed to them if they are not convinced, where such evidence is offered to them as does convince them? And to punish all such you have my free consent.

Whether all you say have any thing more in it than this, I appeal to my readers: and should willingly do it to you, did not I fear that the jumbling of those good and plausible words in your head, "of sufficient evidence," "consider as one ought," &c. might a little jargogle your thoughts, and lead you hoodwinked the round of your own beaten circle. This is a danger those are much exposed to who accustom themselves to relative and doubtful terms, and so put together, that, though asunder they signify something, yet, when their meaning comes to be cast up as they are placed, it amounts to just nothing.

You go on, "What justice it would be for the magistrate to punish one for not being a Cartesian, it will be time enough to consider when I have proved it to be as necessary for men to be Cartesians, as it is to be Christians, or members of God's church." This will be a much better answer to what I said, when you have proved that to be a Christian, or a member of God's church, it is necessary for a dissenter to be of the church of England. If it be not justice to punish a man for not being a Cartesian, because it is not as necessary to be a Cartesian as to be a Christian; I fear the same argument will hold against punishing a man for not using the cross in baptism, or not kneeling at the Lord's Supper; and it will lie on you to prove that it is as necessary to use the cross in baptism, or kneeling at the Lord's Supper, as it is to be a Christian: for if they are not as necessary as it is to be a Christian,

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you cannot, by your own rule, without injustice, punish men for not conforming to a church wherein they are made an indispensable part of conformity; and by this rule it will be injustice to punish any man for not being of that church wherein any thing is required not necessary to salvation; for that, I think, is the necessity of being a Christian.

To show the unreasonableness of punishing dissenters to make them examine, I said, "that so they were punished for not having offended against a law; for there is no law of the land that requires them to examine." Your reply is, that "you think the contrary is plain enough: for where the laws provide sufficient means of instruction in the true religion, and then require all men to embrace that religion; you think the most natural construction of those laws is, that they require men to embrace it upon instruction and conviction, as it cannot be expected they should do without examining the grounds upon which it stands." Your answer were very true, if they could not embrace without examining and conviction. But since there is a shorter way to embracing, which costs no more pains than walking as far as the church, your answer no more proves that the law requires examining, than if a man at Harwich being subpœnaed to appear in Westminster-Hall next term, you should say the subpœna required him to come by sea, because there was sufficient means provided for his passage in the ordinary boat that by appointment goes constantly from Harwich to London: but he, taking it to be more for his ease and despatch, goes the shorter way by land, and finds that having made his appearance in court as was required, the law is satisfied, and there is no inquiry made what way he came thither.

If therefore men can embrace so as to satisfy the law without examining, and it be true that they so "fly from the means of right information, are so negligent in, and averse to examining," that there is need of penalties to make them do it, as you tell us at large; how is it a natural construction of those laws, that they require men to examine, which having provided suf-

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ficient means of instruction, require men only to conform, without saying any thing of examining? especially when the cause assigned by you of men's neglecting to examine, is not want of "means of instruction, but want of penalties to overbalance their aversion" to the using those means; which you yourself confess, where you say, "When the best provision is made that can be, for the instruction of the people, you fear a great part of them will still need penalties to bring them to hear and receive instruction:" and therefore perhaps the remainder of that paragraph, when you have considered it again, will not appear so impertinent a declamation as you are pleased to think it: for it charged your method, as it then stood, of punishing men for not considering and examining, with these absurdities, that it punished men for not doing that which the law did not require of them, nor declare the neglect of to be a fault; contrary to the ends of all laws, contrary to the common sense of mankind, and the practice of all lawmakers; who always first declared the fault, and then denounced penalties against those who after a time set should be found guilty of it. It charged your method, that it allows not impunity to the innocent, but punishes whole tribes together, the innocent with the guilty; and that the thing designed in the law was not mentioned in it, but left to the people, whose fault was want of consideration, to be by consideration found out.

To avoid these absurdities, you have reformed your scheme, and now in your reply own, with the frankest persecutors, that you punish men downright for their religion, and that to be a dissenter from the true religion is a fault to be punished by the magistrate. This indeed is plain dealing, and clears your method from these absurdities as long as you keep to it: but whereever you tell us, that your laws are to make men hear, to make men consider, to make men examine; whilst the laws themselves say nothing of hearing, considering, and examining; there you are still chargeable with all these absurdities: nor will the distinction, which without any difference you would set up, between the

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fault for which men were to be punished, and the end for which they are to be punished, do you any service herein, as I have showed you in another place.

To what I said, L. II. from p. 88 to p. 95, concerning those who by your scheme are to be punished, you having thought fit not to answer any thing, I shall here again offer it to your consideration:

"Let us inquire, first, Who it is you would have be punished. In the place above cited, they are those who are got into a wrong way, and are deaf to all persuasions. If these are the men to be punished, let a law be made against them: you have my consent; and that is the proper course to have offenders punished. For you do not, I hope, intend to punish any fault by a law, which you do not name in the law; nor make a law against any fault you would not have punished. And now, if you are sincere, and in earnest, and are, as a fair man should be, for what your words plainly signify, and nothing else; what will such a law serve for? Men in the wrong way are to be punished: but who are in the wrong way is the question. You have no more reason to determine it against one who differs from you, than he has to conclude against you, who differ from him: no, not though you have the magistrate and the national church on your side. For if to differ from them be to be in the wrong way, you, who are in the right way in England, will be in the wrong way in France. Every one here must be judge for himself; and your law will reach nobody, till you have convinced him he is in the wrong way: and then there will be no need of punishment to make him consider; unless you will affirm again what you have denied, and have men punished for embracing the religion they believe to be true, when it differs from yours or the public.

"Besides being in the wrong way, those whom you would have punished must be such as are deaf to all persuasions. But any such, I suppose, you will hardly find, who hearken to nobody, not to those of their own way. If you mean by deaf to all persuasions, all per-

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suasions of a contrary party, or of a different church; such, I suppose, you may abundantly find in your own church, as well as elsewhere; and I presume to them you are so charitable, that you would not have them punished for not lending on ear to seducers. For constancy in the truth, and perseverance in the faith, is, I hope, rather to be encouraged, than by any penalties checked in the orthodox. And your church, doubtless, as well as all others, is orthodox to itself in all its tenets. If you mean by all persuasion, all your persuasion, or all persuasion of those of your communion, you do but beg the question, and suppose you have a right to punish those who differ from, and will not comply with you.

"Your next words are,—'When men fly from the means of a right information, and will not so much as consider how reasonable it is thoroughly and impartially to examine a religion, which they embraced upon such inducements as ought to have no sway at all in the matter, and therefore with little or no examination of the proper grounds of it; what human method can be used to bring them to act like men, in an affair of such consequence, and to make a wiser and more rational choice, but that of laying such penalties upon them, as may balance the weight of those prejudices which inclined them to prefer a false way before the true, and recover them to so much sobriety and reflection, as seriously to put the question to themselves, Whether it be really worth the while to undergo such inconveniencies for adhering to a religion, which, for any thing they know, may be false, or for rejecting another (if that be the case) which, for any thing they know, may be true, till they have brought it to the bar of reason, and given it a fair trial there?'—Here you again bring in such as prefer a false way before a true: to which having answered already, I shall here say no more, but that, since our church will not allow those to be in a false way who are out of the church of Rome, because the church of Rome, which pretends infallibility, declares hers to be the only true way; certainly

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no one of our church, nor any other, which claims not infallibility, can require any one to take the testimony of any church, as a sufficient proof of the truth of her own doctrine. So that true and false, as it commonly happens, when we suppose them for ourselves, or our party, in effect signify just nothing, or nothing to the purpose; unless we can think that true or false in England, which will not be so at Rome or Geneva; and *vice versâ.* As for the rest of the description of those, on whom you are here laying penalties; I beseech you consider whether it will not belong to any of your church, let it be what it will. Consider, I say, if there be none in your church 'who have embraced her religion upon such inducements as ought to have no sway at all in the matter, and therefore with little or no examination of the proper grounds of it; who have not been inclined by prejudices; who do not adhere to a religion, which, for any thing they know, may be false; and who have rejected another, which, for any thing they know, may be true.' If you have any such in your communion, and it will be an admirable, though I fear but a little flock, that has none such in it, consider well what you have done. You have prepared rods for them, for which I imagine they will con you no thanks. For to make any tolerable sense of what you here propose, it must be understood that you would have men of all religions punished, to make them consider 'whether it be really worth the while to undergo such inconveniencies for adhering to a religion, which, for any thing they know, may be false.' If you hope to avoid that, by what you have said of true and false; and pretend that the supposed preference of the true way in your church ought to preserve its members from your punishment; you manifestly trifle. For every church's testimony, that it has chosen in the true way, must be taken for itself; and then none will be liable; and your new invention of punishment is come to nothing: or else the differing churches' testimonies must be taken one for another; and then they will be all out of the true way,

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and your church need penalties as well as the rest. So that, upon your principles, they must all or none be punished. Choose which you please; one of them, I think, you cannot escape.

"What you say in the next words: 'Where instruction, if stiffly refused, and all admonitions and persuasions prove vain and ineffectual;' differs nothing, but in the way of expressing, from deaf to all persuasions; and so that is answered already.

"In another place, you give us another description of those you think ought to be punished, in these words: 'Those who refuse to embrace the doctrine, and submit to the spiritual government of the proper ministers of religion, who by special designation are appointed to exhort, admonish, reprove,' &c. Here, then, those to be punished, 'are such who refuse to embrace the doctrine, and submit to the government of the proper ministers of religion.' Whereby we are as much still at uncertainty as we were before, who those are who, by your scheme, and laws suitable to it, are to be punished; since every church has, as it thinks, its proper ministers of religion; and if you mean those that refuse to embrace the doctrine, and submit to the government of the ministers of another church, then all men will be guilty, and must be punished, even those of your own church as well as others. If you mean those who refuse, &c. the ministers of their own church, very few will incur your penalties; but if by these proper ministers of religion the ministers of some particular church are intended, why do you not name it? Why are you so reserved in a matter, wherein, if you speak not out, all the rest that you say will be to no purpose? Are men to be punished for refusing to embrace the doctrine, and submit to the government of the proper ministers of the church of Geneva? For this time, since you have declared nothing to the contrary, let me suppose you of that church, and then, I am sure, that is it that you would name: for of whatever church you are, if you think the ministers of any one church ought to be hearkened

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to and obeyed, it must be those of your own. There are persons to be punished, you say. This you contend for all through your book, and lay so much stress on it, that you make the preservation and propagation of religion, and the salvation of souls, to depend on it; and yet you describe them by so general and equivocal marks, that, unless it be upon suppositions which nobody will grant you, I dare say neither you nor any body else will be able to find one guilty. Pray find me, if you can, a man whom you can judicially prove (for he that is to be punished by law must be fairly tried) is in a wrong way, in respect of his faith; I mean, 'who is deaf to all persuasions, who flies from all means of a right information, who refuses to embrace the doctrine, and submit to the government of the spiritual pastors.' And, when you have done that, I think I may allow you what power you please to punish him, without any prejudice to the toleration the author of the letter proposes.

"But why, I pray, all this boggling, all this loose talking, as if you knew not what you meant, or durst not speak it out? Would you be for punishing somebody, you know not whom? I do not think so ill of you. Let me then speak out for you. The evidence of the argument has convinced you that men ought not to be persecuted for their religion; that the severities in use amongst Christians cannot be defended; that the magistrate has not authority to compel any one to his religion. This you are forced to yield. But you would fain retain some power in the magistrate's hands to punish dissenters, upon a new pretence, viz. not for having embraced the doctrine and worship they believe to be true and right, but for not having well considered their own and the magistrate's religion. To show you that I do not speak wholly without book, give me leave to mind you of one passage of yours: the words are, 'Penalties to put them upon a serious and impartial examination of the controversy between the magistrates and them.' Though these words be not intended to tell us who you would have punished,

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yet it may be plainly inferred from them. And they more clearly point out whom you aim at than all the foregoing places, where you seem to, and should, describe them. For they are such as between whom and the magistrate there is a controversy; that is, in short, who differ from the magistrate in religion. And now, indeed, you have given us a note by which these you would have punished may be known. We have, with much ado, found out at last whom it is we may presume you would have punished. Which in other cases is usually not very difficult, because there the faults to be amended easily design the persons to be corrected. But yours is a new method, and unlike all that ever went before it.

"In the next place, let us see for what you would have them punished. You tell us, and it will easily be granted you, that not to examine and weigh impartially, and without prejudice or passion, all which, for shortness' sake, we will express by this one word consider, the religion one embraces or refuses, is a fault very common, and very prejudicial to true religion, and the salvation of men's souls. But penalties and punishments are very necessary, say you, to remedy this evil.

"Let us see now how you apply this remedy. Therefore, say you, let all dissenters be punished. Why? Have no dissenters considered of religion? Or have all conformists considered? That you yourself will not say. Your project, therefore, is just as reasonable as if a lethargy growing epidemical in England, you should propose to have a law made to blister and scarify and shave the heads of all who wear gowns; though it be certain that neither all who wear gowns are lethargic, nor all who are lethargic wear gowns:

——"Dii te, Damasippe, Deesque
Verum ob consilium donent tonsore.

For there could not be certainly a more learned advice, than that one man should be pulled by the ears,

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because another is asleep. This, when you have considered of it again (for I find, according to your principle, all men have now and then need to be jogged), you will, I guess, be convinced is not like a fair physician, to apply a remedy to a disease; but, like an enraged enemy, to vent one's spleen upon a party. Common sense, as well as common justice, requires, that the remedies of laws and penalties should be directed against the evil that is to be removed, wherever it be found. And if the punishment you think so necessary be, as you pretend, to cure the mischief you complain of, you must let it pursue, and fall on the guilty, and those only, in what company soever they are; and not, as you here propose, and is the highest injustice, punish the innocent considering dissenter, with the guilty; and on the other side, let the inconsiderate guilty conformist escape, with the innocent. For one may rationally presume that the national church has some, nay more, in proportion, of those who little consider or concern themselves about religion, than any congregation of dissenters. For conscience, or the care of their souls, being once laid aside; interest of course, leads men into that society, where the protection and countenance of the government, and hopes of preferment, bid fairest to all their remaining desires. So that if careless, negligent, inconsiderate men in matters of religion, who, without being forced, would not consider, are to be roused into a care of their souls, and a search after truth, by punishments; the national religion, in all countries, will certainly have a right to the greatest share of those punishments, at least, not to be wholly exempt from them.

"This is that which the author of the letter, as I remember, complains of, and that justly, viz. That the pretended care of men's souls always expresses itself, in those who would have force any way made use of to that end, in very unequal methods; some persons being to be treated with severity, whilst others guilty of the same faults, are not to be so much as touched. Though you are got pretty well out of the deep mud, and

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renounce punishments directly for religion; yet you stick still in this part of the mire; whilst you would have dissenters punished to make them consider, but would not have any thing done to conformists, though ever so negligent in this point of considering. The author's letter pleased me, because it is equal to all mankind, is direct, and will, I think, hold every where; which I take to be a good mark of truth. For I shall always suspect that neither to comport with the truth of religion, or the design of the Gospel, which is suited to only some one country or party. What is true and good in England, will be true and good at Rome too, in China or Geneva. But whether your great and only method for the propagating of truth, by bringing the inconsiderate by punishments to consider, would, according to your way of applying your punishments only to dissenters from the national religion, be of use in those countries, or any where but where you suppose the magistrate to be in the right; judge you. Pray, sir, consider a little, whether prejudice has not some share in your way of arguing, for this is your position; Men are generally negligent in examining the grounds of their religion. This I grant. But could there be a more wild and incoherent consequence drawn from it, than this; therefore dissenters must be punished?"—

All this you are pleased to pass over without the least notice: but perhaps you think you have made me full satisfaction in your answer to my demand, who are to be punished? We will here therefore consider that as it stands, where you tell us, "Those who are to be punished according to the whole tenour of your answer, are no other but such, as having sufficient evidence tendered them of the true religion, do yet reject it: whether utterly refusing to consider that evidence, or not considering as they ought, viz. with such care and diligence as the matter deserves and requires, and with honest and unbiassed minds; and what difficulty there is in this, you say, you cannot imagine." You promised you would tell the world who they were, plainly and directly. And though you tell us, you cannot

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imagine what difficulty there is in this your account of who are to be punished, yet there are some things in it, that make it to my apprehension not very plain and direct. For first they must be only those who have the true religion tendered them with sufficient evidence; wherein there appears some difficulty to me, who shall be judge what is the true religion: and for that, in every country it is most probable the magistrate will be. If you think of any other, pray tell us. Next there seems some difficulty to know, who shall be judge what is sufficient evidence. For where a man is to be punished by law, he must be convicted of being guilty; which since in this case he cannot be, unless it be proved he has had the true religion tendered to him with sufficient evidence, it is necessary that somebody there must be judge what is the true religion, and what is sufficient evidence; and others to prove it has been so tendered. If you were to be of the jury, we know what would be your verdict concerning sufficient evidence, by these words of yours, "To say that a man who has the true religion proposed to him with sufficient evidence of its truth, may consider it as he ought, or do his utmost in considering, and yet not perceive the truth of it, is neither more nor less than to say that sufficient evidence is not sufficient: for what does any man mean by sufficient evidence, but such as will certainly win assent wherever it is duly considered?" Upon which his conforming, or not conforming, would without any further questions determine the point. But whether the rest of the jury could upon this be able ever to bring in any man guilty, and so liable to punishment, is a question. For if sufficient evidence be only that which certainly wins assent, wherever a man does his utmost in considering; it will be very hard to prove that a man who rejects the true religion has had it tendered with sufficient evidence, because it will be very hard to prove he has not done his utmost in considering it. So that, notwithstanding all you have here said, to punish any man by your method is not yet so very practicable.

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But you clear all in your following words, which say, "there is nothing more evident than that those who reject the true religion are culpable, and deserve to be punished." By whom? By men: that is so far from being evident, as you talk, that it will require better proofs than I have yet seen for it. Next you say, "It is easy enough to know when men reject the true religion." Yes, when the true religion is known, and agreed on what shall be taken to be so in judicial proceedings, which can scarce be till it is agreed who shall determine what is true religion, and what not. Suppose a penalty should in the university be laid on those who rejected the true peripatetic doctrine, could that law be executed on any one, unless it were agreed who should be judge what was the true peripatetic doctrine? If you say it may be known out of Aristotle's writings: then I answer, that it would be a more reasonable law to lay the penalty on any one, who rejected the doctrine contained in the books allowed to be Aristotle's, and printed under his name. You may apply this to the true religion, and the books of the Scripture, if you please: though, after all, there must be a judge agreed on, to determine what doctrines are contained in either of those writings, before the law can be practicable.

But you go on to prove, that "it is easy to know when men reject the true religion: for, say you, that requires no more than that we know that that religion was tendered to them with sufficient evidence of the truth of it. And that it may be tendered to men with such evidence, and that it may be known when it is so tendered, these things, you say, you take leave here to suppose." You suppose then more than can be allowed you. For that it can be judicially known that the true religion has been tendered to any one with sufficient evidence, is what I deny, and that for reasons above-mentioned, which, were there no other difficulty in it, were sufficient to show the impracticableness of your method.

You conclude this paragraph thus, "which is all that needs be said upon this head to show the consistency

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and practicableness of this method: and what do you any where say against this?" Whether I say any thing or no against it, I will bring a friend of yours that will say that dissenters ought to be punished for being out of the communion of the church of England. I will ask you now, how it can be proved that such an one is guilty of rejecting the one only true religion? Perhaps it is because he scruples the cross in baptism, or godfathers and godmothers as they are used, or kneeling at the Lord's Supper; perhaps it is because he cannot pronounce all damned that believe not all Athanasius's Creed; or cannot join with some of those repetitions in our Common Prayer; thinking them to come within the prohibition of our Saviour; each of which shuts a man out from the communion of the church of England, as much as if he denied Jesus Christ to be the Son of God. Now, sir, I beseech you, how can it be known, that ever sufficient evidence was tendered to such a dissenter to prove, that what he rejects is a part of that one only true religion, which unless he be of, he cannot be saved? Or indeed how can it be known, that any dissenter rejects that one only true religion, when being punished barely for not conforming, he is never asked, what part it is he dissents from or rejects? And so it may be some of those things which I imagine will always want sufficient evidence to prove them to be parts of that only one true religion, without the hearty embracing whereof no man can be saved.

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CHAPTER IV.

What Degrees of Punishment.

How much soever you have endeavoured to reform the doctrine of persecution to make it serve your turn, and give it the colour of care and zeal for the true religion in the country where alone you are concerned it should be made use of; yet you have laboured in vain, and done no more, but given the old engine a new varnish to set it off the better, and make it look less frightful: for, by what has been said in the foregoing chapters, I think it will appear, that if any magistrate have power to punish men in matters of religion, all have; and that dissenters from the national religion must be punished every where or no where. The horrid cruelties that in all ages, and of late in our view, have been committed under the name, and upon the account of religion, give so just an offence and abhorrence to all who have any remains, not only of religion, but humanity left, that the world is ashamed to own it. This objection therefore, as much as words or professions can do, you have laboured to fence against; and to exempt your design from the suspicion of any severities, you take care in every page almost to let us hear of moderate force, moderate penalties; but all in vain: and I doubt not but when this part too is examined, it will appear, that as you neither have, nor can limit the power of punishing to any distinct sort of magistrates, nor exempt from punishment the dissenters from any national religion: so neither have, nor can you, limit the punishment to any degree short of the highest, if you will use punishments at all in matters of religion. What you have done in this point besides giving us good words, I will now examine.

You tell me, "I have taken a liberty which will need pardon," because I say, "You have plainly yielded the

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question by owning those greater severities to be improper and unfit." But if I shall make it out, that those are as proper and fit as your moderate penalties; and that if you will use one, you must come to the other, as will appear from what you yourself say; whatever you may think, I shall not imagine other readers will conclude I have taken too great liberty, or shall much need pardon. For if, as you say in the next page, "authority may reasonably and justly use some degrees of force where it is needful;" I say they may also use any degree of force where it is needful. Now upon your grounds, fire and sword, tormenting and undoing, and those other punishments which you condemn, will be needful, even to torments of the highest severity, and be as necessary as those moderate penalties which you will not name. For I ask you, to what purpose do you use any degrees of force? Is it to prevail with men to do something that is in their power, or that is not? The latter I suppose you will not say, till your dove of force is so increased, that you shall think it necessary to be made use of to produce impossibilities: if force then be to be used only to bring men to do what is in their power, what is the necessity you assign of it? only this, as I remember, viz. That "when gentle admonitions and earnest entreaties will not prevail, what other means is there left but force?" And I, upon the same ground, reply: If lesser degrees of force will not prevail, what other means is there left but greater? If the lowest degree of force be necessary where gentler means will not prevail, because there is no other means left; higher degrees of force are necessary, where lower will not prevail, for the same reason. Unless you will say all degrees of force work alike; and that lower penalties prevail as much on men as greater, and will equally bring them to do what is in their power. If so, a fillip on the forehead, or a farthing mulct, may be penalty enough to bring men to what you propose. But if you shall laugh at these, as being for their smallness insufficient, and therefore will think it necessary to increase them; I say, wherever experience shows any degree of force to be insufficient to prevail, there will be still the

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same necessity to increase it. For wherever the end is necessary, and force is the means, the only means left to procure it, both which you suppose in our case; there it will be found always necessary to increase the degrees of force, where the lower prove ineffectual, as well till you come to the highest as when you begin with the lowest. So that in your present case I do not wonder you use so many shifts, as I shall show by and by you do, to decline naming the highest degree of what you call moderate. If any degree be necessary, you cannot assign any one, condemn it in words as much as you please, which may not be so, and which you must not come to the use of. If there be no such necessity of force as will justify those higher degrees of it, which are severities you condemn; neither will it justify the use of your lower degrees.

If, as you tell us, "false religions prevail against the true, merely by the advantage they have in the corruption and pravity of human nature left to itself unbridled by authority;" if the not receiving the true religion be a mark and effect merely of the prevalency of the corruption of human nature; may not, nay, must not the magistrate, if less will not do, use his utmost force to bring men to the true religion? his force being given him to suppress that corruption; especially since you give it for a measure of the force to be used, that it must be "so much, as without which ordinarily they will not embrace the truth that must save them." What ordinarily signifies here to make any determinate measure, is hard to guess; but signify it what it will, so much force must be used, as "without which men will not embrace the truth;" which, if it signify any thing intelligible, requires, that where lower degrees will not do, greater must be used, till you come to what will ordinarily do; but what that ordinarily is, no man can tell. If one man will not be wrought on by as little force as another, must not greater degrees of force be used to him? Shall the magistrate who is obliged to do what lies in him, be excused, for letting him be damned, without the use of all the means that were in his power? And will it be sufficient for him to plead, that though

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he did not all that lay in him, yet he did what ordinarily prevailed, or what prevailed on several others? Force, if that be the remedy, must be proportioned to the opposition. If the dose that has frequently wrought on others, will not purge a man whose life lies on it; must it not therefore be made sufficient and effectual, because it will be more than what is called ordinary? Or can any one say the physician has done his duty, who lets his patient in an extraordinary case perish in the use of only moderate remedies, and pronounces him incurable, before he has tried the utmost he can with the powerfullest remedies which are in his reach?

Having renounced loss of estate, corporal punishments, imprisonment, and such sort of severities, as unfit to be used in matters of religion; you ask, "Will it follow from hence that the magistrate has no right to use any force at all?" Yes, it will follow, till you give some answer to what I say in that place, viz. "That if you give up punishments of a man in his person, liberty, and estate, I think we need not stand with you for any punishments may be made use of." But this you pass by without any notice. I doubt not but you will here think you have a ready answer, by telling me, you mean only "depriving men of their estates, maiming them with corporal punishments, starving and tormenting them in noisome prisons," and other such severities which you have by name excepted; but lower penalties may yet be used: for penalties is the word you carefully use, and disclaim that of punishment, as if you disowned the thing. I wish you would tell us too by name what those lower penalties are you would have used, as well as by name you tell us those severities you disallow. They may not maim a man with corporal punishments; may they use any corporal punishments at all? They may not starve and torment them in noisome prisons for religion; that you condemn as much as I. May they put them in any prison at all? They may not deprive men of their estates: I suppose you mean their whole estates: May they take away half, or a quarter, or an hundredth part? It is strange

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you should be able to name the degrees of severity that will hinder more than promote the progress of religion, and cannot name those degrees that will promote rather than hinder it; that those who would take their measures by you, and follow your scheme, might know how to proceed so, as not to do more harm than good: for since you are so certain, that there are degrees of punishments or penalties that will do good, and other degrees of them that will do harm; ought you not to have told us, what that true degree is, or how it may be known, without which all your goodly scheme is of no use? For allowing all you have said to be as true as you would have it, no good can be done without showing the just measure of punishment to be used.

If the degree be too great, it will, you confess, do harm: can one then not err on the other hand, by being too little? If you say so, we are agreed, and I desire no better toleration. If therefore too great will do harm, and too little, in your opinion, will do no good; you ought to tell us the just mean. This I pressed upon you; whereof that the reader may be judge, I shall here trouble him with the repetition:

"There is a third thing, that you are so tender and reserved in, as either naming the criminals to be punished, or positively telling us the end for which they should be punished; and that is, with what sort of penalties, what degree of punishment, they should be forced. You are indeed so gracious to them, that you renounce the severities and penalties hitherto made use of. You tell us, they should be but moderate penalties. But if we ask you what are moderate penalties, you confess you cannot tell us: so that by moderate here, you yet mean nothing. You tell us, the outward force to be applied, should be duly tempered. But what that due temper is, you do not, or cannot say; and so, in effect, it signifies just nothing. Yet if in this you are not plain and direct, all the rest of your design will signify nothing. For it being to have some men, and to some end punished; yet if it cannot be found what punishment is to be used, it is, notwithstanding all you have said, utterly

unless. You tell us modestly, That to determine precisely the just measure of the punishment, will require some consideration. If the faults were precisely determined, and could be proved, it would require no more consideration to determine the measure of the punishment in this, than it would in any other case, where those were known. But where the fault is undefined, and the guilt not to be proved, as I suppose it will be found in this present business of examining; it will without doubt require consideration to proportion the force to the design: just so much consideration as it will require to fit a coat to the moon, or proportion a shoe to the feet of those who inhabit her. For to proportion a punishment to a fault that you do not name, and so we in charity ought to think you do not yet know, and a fault that when you have named it, it will be impossible to be proved who are or are not guilty of it, will, I suppose, require as much consideration as to fit a shoe to feet whose size and shape are not known.

"However, you offer some measures whereby to regulate your punishments; which, when they are looked into, will be found to be just as good as none, they being impossible to be any rule in the case. The first is, So much force, or such penalties as are ordinarily sufficient to prevail with men of common discretion, and not desperately perverse and obstinate, to weigh matters of religion carefully and impartially, and without which ordinarily they will not do this. Where it is to be observed:

"First, That who are these men of common discretion, is as hard to know, as to know what is a fit degree of punishment in the case; and so you do but regulate one uncertainty by another. Some men will be apt to think, that he who will not weigh matters of religion, which are of infinite concernment to him, without punishment, cannot in reason be thought a man of common discretion. Many women of common discretion enough to manage the ordinary affairs of their families, are not able to read a page in an ordinary author, or to understand and give an account what it means,

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when read to them. Many men of common discretion in their callings are not able to judge when an argument is conclusive or no; much less to trace it through a long train of consequences. What penalties shall be sufficient to prevail with such, who upon examination, I fear, will not be found to make the least part of mankind, to examine and weigh matters of religion carefully and impartially? The law allows all to have common discretion, for whom it has not provided guardians or Bedlam. So that, in effect, your men of common discretion, are all men, not judged idiots or madmen: and penalties sufficient to prevail with men of common discretion are penalties sufficient to prevail with all men but idiots and madmen; which what a measure it is to regulate penalties by, let all men of common discretion judge.

"Secondly, You may be pleased to consider, that all men of the same degree of discretion are not apt to be moved by the same degree of penalties. Some are of a more yielding, some of a more stiff temper; and what is sufficient to prevail on one is not half enough to move the other; though both men of common discretion. So that common discretion will be here of no use to determine the measure of punishment: especially, when in the same clause you except men desperately perverse and obstinate; who are as hard to be known, as what you seek, viz. the just proportions of punishments necessary to prevail with men to consider, examine, and weigh matters of religion: wherein if a man tells you he has considered, he has weighed, he has examined, and so goes on in his former course, it is impossible for you ever to know whether he has done his duty, or whether he be desperately perverse and obstinate. So that this exception signifies just nothing.

"There are many things in your use of force and penalties, different from any I ever met with elsewhere. One of them, this clause of yours concerning the measure of punishments, now under consideration, offers me: wherein you proportion your punishments

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only to the yielding and corrigible, not to the perverse and obstinate; contrary to the common discretion which has hitherto made laws in other cases, which levels the punishments against refractory offenders, and never spares them because they are obstinate. This however I will not blame as an oversight in you. Your new method, which aims at such impracticable and inconsistent things as laws cannot bear, nor penalties be useful to, forced you to it. The uselessness, absurdity, and unreasonableness of great severities, you had acknowledged in the foregoing paragraphs; dissenters you would have brought to consider by moderate penalties. They lie under them; but whether they have considered or no, for that you cannot tell, they still continue dissenters. What is to be done now? Why, the incurable are to be left to God, as you tell us. Your punishments were not meant to prevail on the desperately perverse and obstinate, as you tell us here. And so, whatever be the success, your punishments are however justified."

The fullness of your answer to my question, "With what punishments?" made you possibly pass by these two or three pages without making any particular reply to any thing I said in them: we will therefore examine that answer of yours, where you tell us, "That having in your answer declared that you take the severities so often mentioned (which either destroy men, or make them miserable) to be utterly unapt and improper (for reasons there given) to bring men to embrace the truth that must save them: but just how far within those bounds that force extends itself, which is really serviceable to that end, you do not presume to determine." To determine how far moderate force reaches, when it is necessary to your business that it should be determined, is not presuming: you might with more reason have called it presuming to talk of moderate penalties, and not to be able to determine what you mean by them; or to promise, as you do, that you will tell plainly and directly, with what punishments; and here to tell us, you do not presume to determine. But you give a

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reason for this modesty of yours, in what follows, where you tell me, I have not shown any cause why you should. And yet you may find, in what is above repeated to you, these words, "If in this you are not plain and direct, all the rest of your design will signify nothing." But had I failed in showing any cause why you should; and your charity would not enlighten us, unless driven by my reasons; I dare say yet, if I have not shown any cause why you should determine in this point, I can show a cause why you should not. For I will be answerable to you, that you cannot name any degree of punishment, which will not be either so great, as to some among those you condemn, and show what your moderation, what your aversion to persecution is; or else too little to attain those ends for which you propose it. But whatever you tell me, that I have shown no cause why you should determine, I thought it might have passed for a cause why you should determine more particularly, that, as you will find in those pages, I had proved that the measures you offer, whereby to regulate your punishments, are just as good as none.

Your measures in your "argument considered," and which you repeat here again, are in these words: "so much force, or such penalties as are ordinarily sufficient to prevail with men of common discretion, and not desperately perverse, to weigh matters of religion carefully and impartially, and without which ordinarily they will not do this; so much force, or such penalties may fitly and reasonably be used for the promoting true religion in the world, and the salvation of souls. And what just exception this is liable to, you do not understand." Some of the exceptions it is liable to, you might have seen in what I have here again caused to be reprinted, if you had thought them worth your notice. But you go on to tell us here, "that when you speak of men of common discretion, and not desperately perverse and obstinate, you think it is plain enough, that by common discretion you exclude not idiots only, and such as we usually call madmen, but likewise the desperately perverse and obstinate, who perhaps may well

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enough deserve that name, though they be not worst to be sent to Bedlam."

Whether by this you have at all taken off the difficulty, and shown your measure to be any at all in the use of force, I leave the reader to judge. I asked, since great ones are unfit, what degrees of punishment or force are to be used? You answer, "So much force, and such penalties as are ordinarily sufficient to prevail with men of ordinary discretion." I tell you it is as hard to know who those men of common discretion are, as what degree of punishment you would have used; unless we will take the "determination of the law, which allows all to have common discretion, for whom it has not provided guardians or Bedlam:" so that in effect, your men of common discretion are all men not judged idiots or madmen. To clear this, you tell us, "when you speak of men of common discretion, and not desperately perverse and obstinate, you think it is plain enough, by common discretion you exclude not idiots only, and such as are usually called madmen, but likewise the desperately perverse and obstinate." It may be you did, for you best know what you meant in writing: but if by men of common discretion, you excluded the desperately perverse and obstinate, let us put what you meant by the words, men of common discretion, in the place of those words themselves, and then, according to your meaning, your rule stands thus: penalties ordinarily sufficient to prevail with men not desperately perverse and obstinate, and with men not desperately perverse and obstinate; so that at last, by men of common discretion, either you excluded only idiots and madmen; or if we must take your word for it, that by them you excluded likewise the desperately perverse and obstinate, and so meant something else; it is plain, you meant only a very useless and insignificant tautology.

You go on, and tell us, "If the penalties you speak of, be intended for the curing men's unreasonable prejudices and refractoriness against the true religion, then the reason why the desperately perverse and obstinate are not to be regarded in measuring these

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penalties, is very apparent. For as remedies are not provided for the incurable, so in the preparing and tempering them, regard is to be had only to those for whom they are designed." Which, true or false, is nothing to the purpose, in a place where you profess to inform us, what punishments are to be used. We are inquiring who are the desperately perverse and obstinate, and not whether they are to be punished or no. You pretend to give us a rule to know what degrees of force are to be used, and tell us, "it is so much as is ordinarily sufficient to prevail with men of common discretion, and not desperately perverse and obstinate." We again ask, who are your men of common discretion? You tell us, "such as are not madmen or idiots, or desperately perverse and obstinate." Very well, but who are those desperately perverse and obstinate, how shall we know them? and to this you tell us, "they are not to be regarded in measuring these penalties." Whereby certainly we have got a plain measure of your moderate penalties. No, not yet; you go on in your next paragraph to perfect it, where you say, "To prevent a little cavil, it may be needful to note that there are degrees of perverseness and obstinacy, and that men may be perverse and obstinate without being desperately so." So then now we have your measure complete; and to determine the just degrees of punishments, and to clear up the doubt, who are the desperately perverse and obstinate, we need but be told that "there are degrees of perverseness and obstinacy;" and that men may be perverse and obstinate without being desperately so: and that therefore "some perverse and obstinate persons may be thought curable, though such as are desperately so, cannot." But does all this tell us who are the desperately perverse and obstinate? which is the thing we want to be informed in; nor till you have told us that, have you removed the objection.

But if by desperately perverse and obstinate, you will tell us, you meant those, that are not wrought upon by your moderate penalties, as you seem to intimate in your reason why the desperately perverse and obstinate

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are not to be regarded in measuring these penalties: "for," say you, "as remedies are not provided for the incurable; so in preparing and tempering them, regard is to be had only to those for whom they are designed." So that by the desperately perverse and obstinate, you will perhaps say, it was plain you meant the incurable; for you ordinarily shift off the doubtfulness of one place, by appealing to as doubtful an expression in another. If you say, then, that by desperately perverse and obstinate, you mean incurable; I ask you again by what incurable? by your lower degrees of force? For I hope, where force is proper to work, those who are not wrought on by lower degrees may yet be by higher. If you mean so, then your answer will amount to thus much: moderate penalties are such as are sufficient to prevail on those who are not desperately perverse and obstinate. The desperately perverse and obstinate are those who are incurable, and the incurable are those on whom moderate penalties are not sufficient to prevail: whereby at last we have got a sure measure of what are moderate penalties; just such an one, as if having a sovereign universal medicine put into your hand, which will never fail if you can hit the right dose, which the inventor tells you must be moderate: you should ask him what was the moderate quantity it is to be given in; and he should answer, in such a quantity as was ordinarily sufficient to work on common constitutions, and not desperately perverse and obstinate. And to your asking again, who were of desperately perverse and obstinate constitutions? It should be answered, those that were incurable. And who were incurable? Those whom a moderate quantity would not work on. And thus to your satisfaction, you know the moderate dose by the desperately perverse and obstinate; and the desperately perverse and obstinate by being incurable; and the incurable by the moderate dose. For if, as you say, remedies are not provided for the incurable, and none but moderate penalties are to be provided, is it not plain that you mean, that all that will not be wrought on by your moderate penalties are in your sense incurable?

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To ease you, sir, of justifying yourself, and showing that I have mistaken you, do but tell us positively what in penalties is the highest degree of moderate; who are desperately perverse and obstinate; or who are incurable; without this relative and circular way of defining one by the other; and I will yield myself to have mistaken you, as much as you please.

If by incurable you mean such as no penalties, no punishments, no force is sufficient to work on; then your measure of moderate penalties will be this, that they are such as are sufficient to prevail with men not incurable, *i. e.* who cannot be prevailed on by any punishments, any force whatsoever; which will be a measure of moderate punishments, which (whatsoever you do) some will not be very apt to approve of.

But let us suppose by these marks, since you will afford us no better, that we can find who are desperately perverse and obstinate, we are yet as far as ever from finding the measures of your moderate punishments, till it can be known what degree of force it is, that is ordinarily sufficient to prevail with all that are men of common discretion, and not desperately perverse and obstinate; for you are told, that all men of the same degree of discretion are not apt to be moved with the same degree of penalties: but to this too you answer nothing, and so we are still without any rule or means of knowing how to adjust your punishments, that being ordinarily sufficient to prevail upon one, the double whereof is not ordinarily sufficient to prevail on another.

I tell you in the same place, "that you have given us in another place something like another boundary to your moderate penalties: but when examined, it proves just like the rest, amusing us only with good words, so put together as to have no direct meaning; an art very much in use amongst some sort of learned men: the words are these: 'Such penalties as may not tempt persons who have any concern for their eternal salvation (and those who have none, ought not to be considered) to renounce a religion which they believe to be true, or profess one which they do not believe

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to be so.' If by any concern, you mean such as men ought to have for their eternal salvation; by this rule you may make your punishments as great as you please; and all the severities you have disclaimed may be brought in play again: for none of those will be able to make a man, who is truly concerned for his eternal salvation, renounce a religion he believes to be true, or profess one he does not believe to be so. If by those who have any concern, you mean such who have some faint wishes for happiness hereafter, and would be glad to have things go well with them in the other world, but will venture nothing in this world for it; these the moderatest punishments you can imagine will make to change their religion. If by any concern, you mean whatever may be between these two; the degrees are so infinite, that to proportion your punishments by that, is to have no measure of them at all." To which all the reply I can find is only this, "that there are degrees of carelessness in men of their salvation, as well as of concern for it. So that such as have some concern for their salvation, may yet be careless of it to a great degree. And therefore if those who have any concern for their salvation, deserve regard and pity, then so may some careless persons: though those who have no concern for their salvation deserve not to be considered, which spoils a little harangue you give us," p. 382. If you think this to be an answer to what I said, or that it can satisfy one concerning the way of knowing what degrees of punishment are to be used, pray tell us so. The inquiry is, "what degrees of punishment will tempt a man, who has any concern for his eternal salvation, to renounce a religion he believes to be true?" And it is answered, "There are degrees of carelessness in men of their salvation, as well as concern for it." A happy discovery: what is the use of it? "So that such as have some concern for their salvation may yet be careless of it to a great degree." Very true: by this we may know what degree of force is to be used. No, not a word of that; but the inference is, "and therefore, if those who have any concern for their salvation deserve

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regard and pity, then so may some careless persons; though those who have no concern for their salvation deserve not to be considered." And by this time we know what degree of force will make a man, who has any concern for his salvation, renounce a religion he believes true, and profess one he does not believe to be so. This might do well at cross questions: but you are satisfied with what you have done, and what that is, you tell me in the next words, "which spoils a little harangue of yours given us," p. 382. The harangue, I suppose, is contained in these words:

"One thing I cannot but take notice of in this passage before I leave it: and that is, that you say here, those who have no concern for their salvation deserve not to be considered. In other parts of your letter you pretend to have compassion on the careless, and provide remedies for them; but here of a sudden your charity fails you, and you give them up to eternal perdition, without the least regard, the least pity, and say, they deserve not to be considered. Our Saviour's rule was, the sick and not the whole need a physician: your rule here is, those that are careless are not to be considered, but are to be left to themselves. This would seem strange, if one did not observe what drew you to it. You perceived that if the magistrate was to use no punishments, but such as would make nobody change their religion, he was to use none at all: for the careless would be brought to the national church with any slight punishments; and when they are once there, you are, it seems, satisfied, and look no farther after them. So that by your own measures, if the careless, and those who have no concern for their eternal salvation, are to be regarded and taken care of, if the salvation of their souls is to be promoted, there are to be no punishments used at all; and therefore you leave them out, as not to be considered."

What you have said is so far from spoiling that harangue, as you are pleased to call it, that you having nothing else to say to it, allow what is laid to your charge in it.

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You wind up all concerning the measures of your force in these words: "And as those medicines are thought safe and advisable, which do ordinarily cure, though not always (as none do); so those penalties or punishments, which are ordinarily found sufficient (as well as necessary) for the ends for which they are designed, may fitly and reasonably be used for the compassing these ends." Here your ordinarily comes to your help again; and here one would think that you meant such as cure sometimes, not always; some, though not all: and in this sense will not the utmost severities come within your rule? For can you say, if punishments are to be used to prevail on any, that the greater will, where lower fail, prevail on none? At least, can you be sure of it till they have been tried for the compassing these ends? which, as we shall see in another place, you have assigned various enough. I shall only take notice of two or three often repeated by you, and those are to make men hear, to make men consider, to make men consider as they ought, *i. e.* as you explain it, to make men consider, so as not to reject. The greatness of the force, then, according to this measure, must be sufficient to make men hear, sufficient to make men consider, and sufficient to make men embrace the true religion.

And now the magistrate has all your rules about the measures of punishments to be used, and may confidently and safely go to work to establish it by a law: for he having these marks to guide him, that they must be great enough ordinarily to prevail with those who are not idiots or madmen, nor desperately perverse and obstinate; great enough ordinarily to prevail with men to hear, consider, and embrace the true religion, and yet not so great as might tempt persons, who have any concern for their eternal salvation, to renounce a religion which they believe to be true, or profess one which they do not believe to be so: do you not think you have sufficiently instructed him in your meaning, and enabled him to find the just temper of his punishments according to your scheme, neither too much nor too little? But however you may be satisfied with them, I suppose

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others, when it comes to be put in practice, will by these measures, which are all I can find in your scheme, be scarce able to find what are the punishments you would have used.

In Eutopia there is a medicine called hiera picra, which it is supposed would cure a troublesome disease of that country; but it is not to be given, but in the dose prescribed by the law, and in adjusting the dose lies all the skill: for, if you give too much, it heightens the distemper, and spreads the mortal contagion; and if too little, it does no good at all. With this difficulty the law-makers have been perplexed these many ages, and could not light on the right dose, that would work the cure, till lately there came an undertaker, who would show them how they could not mistake. He bid them then prescribe so much as would ordinarily be effectual upon all that were not idiots or madmen, or in whom the humour was not desperately perverse and obstinate, to produce the end for which it was designed; but not so much as would make a man in health, who had any concern for his life, fall into a mortal disease. These were good words, and he was rewarded for them: but when by them they came to fix the dose, they could not tell whether it ought to be a grain, a dram, or an ounce, or a whole pound, any more than before; and so the dose of their hiera picra, notwithstanding this gentleman's pains, is as uncertain, and that sovereign remedy as useless as ever it was.

In the next paragraph you tell us, "You do not see what more can be required to justify the rule here given." So quick a sight needs no spectacles. "For if I demand that it should express what penalties particularly are such as it says may fitly and reasonably be used; this I must give you leave to tell me is a very unreasonable demand." It is an unreasonable demand, if your rule be such, that by it I may know, without any more ado, the particular penalties that are fit; otherwise it is not unreasonable to demand them by name, if your marks be not sufficient to know them by. But let us hear your reason, "For what rule is there that expresses the particulars that agree with it?"

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And it is an admirable rule with which one can find no particulars that agree; for I challenge you to instance in one: "a rule, you say, is intended for a common measure by which particulars are to be examined, and therefore must necessarily be general." So general, loose, and inconsistent, that no particulars can be examined by it: for again I challenge you, or any man living, to measure out any punishment by this your common measure, and establish it by a law. You go on: "And those to whom it is given are supposed to be able to apply it, and to judge of particulars by it. Nay, it is often seen that they are better able to do this than those who give it: and so it is in the present case; the rule hereby laid down is that by which you suppose governors and law-givers ought to examine the penalties they use for the promoting the true religion, and the salvation of souls." Such a rule it ought to be, I grant, and such an one is desired: but that yours is such a rule as magistrates can take any measure by, for the punishments they are to settle by law is denied, and you are again desired to show. You proceed: "But certainly no man doubts but their prudence and experience enables them to use and apply it better than other men, and to judge more exactly what penalties do agree with it, and what do not; and therefore you think I must excuse you if you do not take upon you to teach them what it becomes you rather to learn from them." If we are not to doubt but their prudence and experience enables magistrates to judge best what penalties are fit, you have indeed given us at last a way to know the measure of punishments to be used: but it is such an one as puts an end to your distinction of moderate penalties: for no magistrates that I know, when they once began to use force to bring men to their religion, ever stopped till they came to some of those severities you condemn: and if you pretend to teach them moderation for the future, with hopes to succeed, you ought to have showed them the just bounds, beyond which they ought not to go, in a model so wholly new, and besides all experience. But if it be to be determined by their prudence and

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experience, whatever degrees of force they shall use, will always be the right.

Law-makers and governors, however beholden to you for your good opinion of their prudence and experience, yet have no reason to thank you for your compliment, by giving such an exercise to their prudence and experience as to put it upon them to find out the just measures of punishments, by rules you give them; which are such, that neither yourself, nor any body else, can find out any measures by. The other part of your compliment will be suspected not to be so much out of your abundant respect to law-makers and governors, as out of the great regard you have to yourself; for you in vain pretend you forbear to name any particular punishments, because you will not take upon you to teach governors and law-makers; when you yourself own, in the same breath, that you are laying down rules by which they are to proceed in the use of penalties for promoting religion; which is little different from teaching: and your whole book is nothing else but about the magistrate's power and duty. I excuse you, therefore, for your own sake, from naming any particular punishments by your rules: for you have a right to it, as all men have a right to be excused from doing what is impossible to be done.

Since, therefore, you grant that those severities you have named, "are more apt to hinder than promote true religion;" and you cannot assign any measures of punishment, short of those great ones you have condemned, which are fit to promote it; I think it argument enough to prove against you, that no punishments are fit; till you have showed some others, either by name, or such marks as they may be certainly known by, which are fit to promote the true religion: and therefore nothing you have said there, or any where else, will serve to show that "it is with little reason, as you tell me, that I say, that if your indirect and at a distance serviceableness may authorize the magistrate to use force in religion, all the cruelties used by the heathens against Christians, by papists against protestants, and all the persecuting of Christians one amongst

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another, are all justifiable." To which you add, "Not to take notice at present how oddly it sounds, that that which authorizes the magistrates to use moderate penalties to promote the true religion, should justify all the cruelties that ever were used to promote heathenism or popery."

As oddly as it sounds to you, it will be evidently true, as long as that which authorizes one, authorizes all magistrates of any religion which they believe to be true, to use force to promote it; and as long as you cannot assign any bounds to your moderate punishments, short of those great ones; which you therefore are not able to do, because your principles, whatever your words deny, will carry you to those degrees of severity, which in profession you condemn: and this, whatever you do, I dare say every considering reader besides you will plainly see. So that this imputation is not so unreasonable; since it is evident, that you must either renounce all punishments whatsoever in religion, or make use of those you condemn: for in the next page you tell us, "That all who have sufficient means of instruction provided for them, may justly be punished for not being of the national religion, where the true is the national religion; because it is a fault in all such not to be of the national religion." In England then, for example, not to be of the national religion is a fault, and a fault to be punished by the magistrate. The magistrate, to cure this fault, lays, on those who dissent, a lower degree of penalties, a fine of 1*d.* per month. This proving insufficient, what is the magistrate to do? If he be obliged, as you say, to amend this fault by penalties, and that low one of 1*d.* per month be not sufficient to procure its amendment, is he not to increase the penalty? He therefore doubles the fine to 2*d.* per month. This too proves ineffectual, and therefore it is still for the same reason doubled, till it come to 1*s.* 5*s.* 10*l.* 100*l.* 1000*l.* None of these penalties working, but yet by being constantly levied, leaving the delinquents no longer able to pay, imprisonment and other corporal punishments follow, to enforce an obedience; till at last this gradual increase of penalties and force,

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each degree whereof wrought on some few, rises to the highest severities against those who stand out. For the magistrate, who is obliged to correct this vice, as you call it, and to do what in him lies to cure this fault, which opposes their salvation; and who (if I mistake not, you tell us) is answerable for all that may follow from his neglect; had no reason to raise the fine from 1*d.* to 2*d.* but because the first was ineffectual: and if that were a sufficient reason for raising from the first to the second degree; why is it not as sufficient to proceed from the second to the third, and so gradually on? I would fain have any one show me where, and upon what ground, such a gradual increase of force can stop, till it come to the utmost extremities. If therefore dissenting from the church of England be a fault to be punished by the magistrate, I desire you to tell me, where he shall hold his hand; to name the sort or degree of punishment, beyond which he ought not to go in the use of force, to cure them of that fault, and bring them to conformity. Till you have done that, you might have spared that paragraph, where you say, "With what ingenuity I draw you in to condemn force in general, only because you acknowledge the ill effects of prosecuting men with fire and sword, &c. you may leave every man to judge." And I leave whom you will to judge, whether from your own principles it does not unavoidably follow, that if you condemn any penalties, you must condemn all, as I have shown; if you will retain any, you must retain all; you must either take or leave all together. For, as I have said, and you deny not, "Where there is no fault, there no punishment is moderate;" so I add, Where there is a fault to be corrected by the magistrate's force, there no degree of force, which is ineffectual, and not sufficient to amend it, can be immoderate; especially if it be a fault of great moment in its consequences, as certainly that must be, which draws after it the loss of men's eternal happiness.

You will, it is likely, be ready to say here again, (for a good subterfuge is never to be forsaken) that you except the "desperately perverse and obstinate." I de-

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sire to know for what reason you except them? Is it because they cease to be faulty? Next, I ask you, who are in your sense the desperately perverse and obstinate? Those that 1*s.* or 5*s.* or 5*l.* or 100*l.* or no fine will work upon? Those who can bear loss of estate, but not loss of liberty? or loss of liberty and estate, but not corporal pains and torments? or all this, but not loss of life? For to these degrees do men differently stand out. And since there are men wrought on by the approaches of fire and faggot, which other degrees of severity could not prevail with; where will you bound your desperately perverse and obstinate? The king of France, though you will allow him not to have truth of his side, yet when he came to dragooning, found few so desperately perverse and obstinate as not to be wrought on. And why should truth, which in your opinion wants force, and nothing but force, to help it, not have the assistance of those degrees of force, when less will not do to make it prevail, which are able to bring men over to false religions, which have no light and strength of their own to help them? You will do well therefore to consider whether your name of severities, in opposition to the moderate punishments you speak of, has or can do you any service; whether the distinction between compelling and coactive power, be of any use or difference at all. For you deny the magistrate to have power to compel; and you contend for his use of his coactive power; which will then be a good distinction, when you can find a way to use coactive, or, which is the same, compelling power, without compulsion. I desire you also to consider, if in matters of religion punishments are to be employed, because they may be useful; whether you can stop at any degree that is ineffectual to the end which you propose, let that end be what it will. If it be barely to gain a hearing, as in some places you seem to say; I think for that small punishments will generally prevail, and you do well to put that and moderate penalties together. If it be to make men consider, as in other places you speak; you cannot tell when you have obtained that end. But if your end be, which you seem most to insist on, to make

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men consider as they ought, *i. e.* till they embrace; there are many on whom all your moderate penalties, all under those severities you condemn, are too weak to prevail. So that you must either confess, not considering so as to "embrace the true religion, *i. e.* not considering as one ought," is no fault to be punished by the coactive force of the magistrate; or else you must resume those severities which you have renounced; choose you whether of the two you please.

Therefore it was not so much at random that I said, "That thither at last persecution must come." Indeed, from what you had said of falling under the stroke of the sword, which was nothing to the purpose; I added, "That if by that you meant any thing to the business in hand, you seem to have a reserve for greater punishments, when less are not sufficient to bring men to be convinced." Which hath produced this warm reply of yours: "And will you ever pretend to conscience or modesty after this? For I beseech you, sir, what words could I have used more express or effectual to signify, that in my opinion no dissenters from the true religion ought to be punished with the sword, but such as choose rather to rebel against the magistrate, than to submit to lesser penalties? (For how any should refuse to submit to those penalties, but by rebelling against the magistrate, I suppose you will not undertake to tell me.) It was for this very purpose that I used those words to prevent cavils; (as I was then so simple as to think I might:) and I dare appeal to any man of common sense and common honesty, whether they are capable of any other meaning. And yet the very thing which I so plainly disclaim in them you pretend (without so much as offering to show how) to collect from them. Thither, you say, at last, viz. to the taking away men's lives for the saving of their souls, persecution must come: as you fear, notwithstanding my talk of moderate punishments, I myself intimate in those words: and if I mean any thing in them to the business in hand, I seem to have a reserve for greater punishments, when lesser are not sufficient to bring men to be convinced. Sir, I should expect fairer deal-

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ing from one of your pagans or Mahometans. But I shall only add, that I would never wish that any man who has undertaken a bad cause should more plainly confess it than by serving it, as here (and not here only) you serve yours." Good sir, be not so angry, lest to observing men you increase the suspicion. One may, without forfeiture of modesty or conscience, fear what men's principles threaten, though their words disclaim it. Non-conformity to the national, when it is the true religion, as in England, is a fault, a vice, say you, to be corrected by the coactive power of the magistrate. If so, and force be the proper remedy, he must increase it, till it be strong enough to work the cure, and must not neglect his duty; for so you make it, when he has force enough in his hand to make this remedy more powerful. For wherever force is proper to work on men, and bring them to a compliance, its not producing that effect can only be imputed to its being too little; and if so, whither at last must it come, but to the late methods of procuring conformity, and as his most Christian majesty called it, saving of souls, in France, or severities like them, when more moderate ones cannot produce it? For to continue inefficacious penalties, insufficient upon trial to master the fault they are applied to, is unjustifiable cruelty; and that which nobody can have a right to use, it serving only to disease and harm people, without amending them: for you tell us, they should be such penalties as should make them uneasy.

He that should vex and pain a sore you had, with frequent dressing it with some moderate, painful, but inefficacious plaster, that promoted not the cure; would justly be thought, not only an ignorant, but a dishonest surgeon. If you are in the surgeon's hands, and his help is requisite, and the cure that way to be wrought; corrosives and fire are the most merciful, as well as only justifiable way of cure, when the case needs them. And therefore I hope I may still pretend to modesty and conscience, though I should have thought you so rational a man, as to be led by your own principles; and so honest, charitable, and zealous for the salvation

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of men's souls, as not to vex and disease them with inefficacious remedies to no purpose, and let them miss of salvation, for want of more vigorous prosecutions. For if conformity to the church of England be necessary to salvation; for else what necessity can you pretend of punishing men at all to bring them to it? it is cruelty to their souls (if you have authority for any such means) to use some, and not to use sufficient force to bring them to conform. And I dare say you are satisfied, that the French discipline of dragooning would have made many in England conformists, whom your lower penalties will not prevail on to be so.

But to inform you that my apprehensions were not so wholly out of the way, I beseech you to read here what you have writ in these words: "For how confidently soever you tell me here, that it is more than I can say for my political punishments, that they were ever useful for the promoting true religion; I appeal to all observing persons, whether wherever true religion or sound Christianity has been nationally received and established by moderate penal laws, it has not always lost ground by the relaxation of those laws: whether sects and heresies, (even the wildest and most absurd) and even Epicurism and atheism, have not continually thereupon spread themselves; and whether the very spirit and life of Christianity has not sensibly decayed, as well as the number of sound professors of it been daily lessened upon it: not to speak of what at this time our eyes cannot but see, for fear of giving offence; though I hope it will be none to any, that have a just concern for truth and piety, to take notice of the books and pamphlets which now fly so thick about this kingdom, manifestly tending to the multiplying of sects and divisions, and even to the promoting of scepticism in religion among us." Here you bemoan the decaying state of religion amongst us at present, by reason of taking off the penalties from protestant dissenters: and I beseech you what penalties were they? Such whereby many have been ruined in their fortunes; such whereby many have lost their liberties, and some

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their lives in prisons; such as have sent some into banishment, stripped of all they had. These were the penal laws by which the national religion was established in England; and these you call moderate: for you say, "Whenever true religion or sound Christianity has been nationally received and established by moderate penal laws;" and I hope you do not here exclude England from having its religion so established by law, which we so often hear of; or if to serve the present occasion you should, would you also deny, that in the following words you speak of the present relaxation in England? where after your appeal to all observing people for the dismal consequences, which you suppose to have every where followed from such relaxations, you add these pathetical words, "Not to speak of what at this time our eyes cannot but see, for fear of giving offence:" so heavy does the present relaxation sit on your mind; which since it is of penal laws you call moderate, I shall show you what they are.

In the first year of Queen Elizabeth, there was a penalty of 1*s.* a Sunday and holiday laid upon every one who came not to the common prayer then established. This penalty of 1*s.* a time not prevailing, as was desired, in the twenty-third year of her reign was increased to 20*l.* a month, and imprisonment for non-payment within three months after judgment given. In the twenty-ninth year of Elizabeth, to draw this yet closer, and make it more forcible, it was enacted, That whoever upon one conviction did not continue to pay on the 20*l.* per month, without any other conviction or proceedings against him till he submitted and conformed, should forfeit all his goods, and two-thirds of his land for his life. But this being not yet thought sufficient, it was in the thirty-fifth year of that queen completed, and the moderate penal laws, upon which our national religion was established, and whose relaxation you cannot bear, but from thence date the decay of the very spirit and life of Christianity, were brought to perfection. For then going to conventicles, or a month's absence from church, was to be punished with imprisonment, till the offender conformed; and if he

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conformed not within three months, then he was to abjure the realm, and forfeit all his goods and chattels for ever, and his lands and tenements during his life: and if he would not abjure, or, abjuring, did not depart the realm within a time prefixed, or returned again, he was to suffer death as a felon. And thus your moderate penal laws stood for the established religion, till these penalties were, in respect of protestant dissenters, lately taken off. And now let the reader judge whether your pretence to moderate punishments, or my suspicion of what a man of your principles might have in store for dissenters, have more of modesty or conscience in it; since you openly declare your regret for the taking away such an establishment, as by the gradual increase of penalties reached men's estates, liberties, and lives; and which you must be presumed to allow and approve of, till you tell us plainly, where, according to your measures, those penalties should, or, according to your principles, they could, have stopped.

You tell us, That where this only true religion, viz. of the church of England, is received, other religions ought "to be discouraged in some measure." A pretty expression for undoing, imprisonment, banishment; for those have been some of the discouragements given to dissenters here in England. You will again, no doubt, cry aloud, that you tell me you condemn these as much as I do. If you heartily condemn them, I wonder you should say so little to discourage them; I wonder you are so silent in representing to the magistrate the unlawfulness and danger of using them, in a discourse where you are treating of the magistrate's power and duty in matters of religion; especially this being the side on which, as far as we may guess by experience, their prudence is apt to err: but your modesty, you know, leaves all to the magistrate's prudence and experience on that side, though you over and over again encourage them not to neglect their duty in the use of force, to which you set no bounds.

You tell us, "Certainly no man doubts but the prudence and experience of governors and law-givers enables them to use and apply it," viz. your rule for

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the measure of punishments, which I have showed to be no rule at all: "And to judge more exactly what penalties do agree with it; and therefore you must be excused if you do not take upon you to teach them what it becomes you rather to learn from them." If your modesty be such, and you then did what became you, you could not but learn from your governors and law-givers, and so be satisfied till within this year or two, that those penalties which they measured out for the establishment of the true religion, though they reached to men's estates, liberties, and lives, were such as were fit. But what you have learned of your law-makers and governors since the relaxation, or what opinion you have of their experience and prudence now, is not so easy to say.

Perhaps you will say again, that you have in express words declared against "fire and sword, loss of estate, maiming with corporal punishments, starving and tormenting in noisome prisons;" and one cannot either in modesty or conscience disbelieve you: yet in the same letter you with sorrow and regret speak of the relaxation of such penalties laid on nonconformity, by which men have lost their estates, liberties, and lives too, in noisome prisons, and in this too must we not believe you? I dare say, there are very few who read that passage of yours, so feelingly it is penned, who want modesty or conscience to believe you therein to be in earnest; and the rather, because what drops from men by chance, when they are not upon their guard, is always thought the best interpretation of their thoughts.

You name "loss of estate, of liberty, and tormenting, which is corporal punishment, as if you were against them:" certainly you know what you meant by these words, when you said, you condemned them; was it any degree of loss of liberty or estate, any degree of corporal punishment that you condemned, or only the utmost, or some degree between these? unless you had then some meaning, and unless you please to tell us, what that meaning was; where it is, that in your

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opinion, the magistrate ought to stop; who can believe you are in earnest? This I think you may and ought to do for our information in your system, without any apprehension that governors and law-givers will deem themselves much taught by you, which your modesty makes you so cautious of. Whilst you refuse to do this, and keep yourself under the mask of moderate, convenient, and sufficient force and penalties, and other such-like uncertain and undetermined punishments, I think a conscientious and sober dissenter might expect fairer dealing from one of my pagans or Mahometans, as you please to call them, than from one, who so professes moderation, that what degrees of force, what kind of punishments will satisfy him, he either knows not, or will not declare. For your moderate and convenient may, when you come to interpret them, signify what punishments you please: for the cure being to be wrought by force, that will be convenient, which the stubbornness of the evil requires; and that moderate, which is but enough to work the cure. And therefore I shall return your own compliment: "That I would never wish that any man who has undertaken a bad cause, should more plainly confess it than by serving it, as here (and not here only) you serve yours." I should beg your pardon for this sort of language, were it not your own. And what right you have to it, the skill you show in the management of general and doubtful words and expressions, of uncertain and undetermined signification, will, I doubt not, abundantly convince the reader. An instance we have in the argument before us; for I appeal to any sober man, who shall carefully read what you write, where you pretend to tell the world plainly and directly what punishments are to be used by your scheme, whether, after having weighed all you say concerning that matter, he can tell what a nonconformist is to expect from you, or find any thing but such acuteness and strength as lie in the uncertainty and reserve of your way of talking; which whether it be any way suited to your modesty and conscience, where you have undertaken to tell us

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what the punishments are, whereby you would have men brought to embrace the true religion, I leave you to consider.

If having said, "Whether true religion or sound Christianity has been nationally received and established by moderate penal laws;" you shall for your defence of the establishment of the religion in England by law, say, which is all is left you to say, that though such severe laws were made, yet it was only by the execution of moderate penal laws, that it was established and supported: but that those severe laws that touched men's estates, liberties, and lives, were never put in execution. Why then do you so seriously bemoan the loss of them? But I advise you not to make use of that plea, for there are examples in the memory of hundreds now living, of every one of those laws of queen Elizabeth being put in execution; and pray remember, if by denying it you require this truth to be made good, it is you that force the publishing of a catalogue of men that have lost their estates, liberties, and lives in prison, which it would be more for the advantage of the religion established by law, should be forgotten.

But to conclude this great accusation of yours: if you were not conscious to yourself of some tendency that way, why such an outcry? Why were modesty and conscience called in question? Why was it less fair dealing than you could have expected from a pagan or Mahometan, for me to say, if in those words "you meant any thing to the business in hand, you seemed to have a reserve for greater punishments?" Your business there being to prove, that there was a power vested in the magistrate to use force in matters of religion, what could be more beside the business in hand, than to tell us, as you interpret your meaning here, that the magistrate had a power to use force against those who rebelled; for whoever denied that, whether dissenters or not dissenters? where was it questioned by the author or me, that "whoever rebelled, were to fall under the stroke of the magistrate's sword?" And therefore, without breach of modesty or conscience, I

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might say, what I again here repeat, "That if in those words you meant any thing to the business in hand, you seemed to have a reserve for greater punishments."

One thing more give me leave to add in defence of my modesty and conscience, or rather to justify myself from having guessed so wholly beside the matter, if I should have said, which I did not, "that I feared you had a reserve for greater punishments." For I having brought the instances of Ananias and Sapphira, to show that the apostles wanted not power to punish, if they found it necessary to use it; you infer, that therefore "punishment may be sometimes necessary." What punishments, I beseech you, for theirs cost them their lives? He that, as you do, concludes from thence, that therefore "punishments may be sometimes necessary," will hardly avoid, whatever he says, to conclude capital punishments necessary: and when they are necessary, it is you know the magistrate's duty to use them. You see how natural it is for men to go whither their principles lead them, though at first sight perhaps they thought it too far.

If to avoid this, you now say you meant it of the punishment of the incestuous Corinthian, whom I also mentioned in the same place; I think, supposing yourself to lie under the imputation of a reserve of greater punishments, you ought in prudence to have said so there. Next you know not what punishment it was the incestuous Corinthian underwent; but it being "for the destruction of the flesh," it seems to be no very light one: and if you will take your friend St. Austin's word for it, as he in the very epistle you quote tells us, it was a very severe one, making as much difference between it, and the severities men usually suffer in prison, as there is between the cruelty of the devil and that of the most barbarous jailor: so that if your moderate punishments will reach to that laid on the incestuous Corinthian, for the destruction of the flesh, we may presume them to be what other people call severities.

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CHAPTER V.

How long your Punishments are to continue.

The measure of punishments being to be estimated as well by the length of their duration, as the intenseness of their degrees, it is fit we take a view also of your scheme in this part:

"I told you, that moderate punishments that are continued, that men find no end of, know no way out of, sit heavy, and become immoderately uneasy. Dissenters you would have punished, to make them consider. Your penalties have had the effect on them you intended; they have made them consider; and they hae done their utmost in considering. What now must be done with them? They must be punished on, for they are still dissenters. If it were just, and you had reason at first to punish a dissenter, to make him consider, when you did not know but that he had considered already; it is as just, and you have as much reason to punish him on, even when he has performed what your punishment was designed for, and has considered, but yet remains a dissenter. For I may justly suppose, and you must grant, that a man may remain a dissenter after all the consideration your moderate penalties can bring him to: when we see great punishments, even those severities you disown as too great, are not able to make men consider so far as to be convinced, and brought over to the national church. If your punishments may not be inflicted on men, to make them consider, who have or may have considered already, for aught you know; then dissenters are never to be once punished, no more than any other sort of men. If dissenters are to be punished, to make them consider, whether they have considered or no; then their punishments,

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though they do consider, must never cease as long as they are dissenters; which whether it be to punish them only to bring them to consider, let all men judge. This I am sure; punishments in your method must either never begin upon dissenters, or never cease. And so pretend moderation if you please, the punishments which your method requires, must be either very immoderate, or none at all." But to this you say nothing, only for the adjusting of the length of your punishments, and therein vindicating the consistency and practicableness of your scheme, you tell us, "that as long as men reject the true religion duly proposed to them, so long they offend and deserve punishment, and therefore it is but just that so long they should be left liable to it." You promised to answer to this question, amongst others, "plainly and directly." The question is, how long they are to be punished? And your answer is, "It is but just that so long they should be liable to punishment." This extraordinary caution in speaking out, if it were not very natural to you, would be apt to make one suspect it was accommodated more to some difficulties of your scheme, than to your promise of answering plainly and directly; or possibly you thought it would not agree to that character of moderation you assume, to own, that all the penal laws which were lately here in force, and whose relaxation you bemoan, should be constantly put in execution. But your moderation in this point comes too late, For as your charity, as you tell us in the next paragraph, "requires that they be kept subject to penalties;" so the watchful charity of others in this age hath found out ways to encourage informers, and put it out of the magistrate's moderation to stop the execution of the law against dissenters, if he should be inclined to it.

We will therefore take it for granted, that if penal laws be made concerning religion, (for more zeal usually animates them than others) they will be put in execution: and indeed I have heard it argued to be very absurd to make or continue laws, that are not constantly put in execution. And now to show you how

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well your answer consists with other parts of your scheme, I shall need only to mind you, that if men must be punished as long as they reject the true religion; those who punish them must be judges what is the true religion. But this objection, with some others, to which this part of your answer is obnoxious, having been made to you more at large elsewhere, I shall here omit, and proceed to other parts of your answer.

You begin with your reason for the answer you afterwards give us in the words I last quoted: your reason runs thus: "For certainly nothing is more reasonable than that men should be subject to punishment as long as they continue to offend. And as long as men reject the true religion, tendered them with sufficient evidence of the truth of it, so long it is certain they offend." It is certainly very reasonable, that men should be subject to punishment from those they offend as long as they continue to offend: but it will not from hence follow, that those who offend God, are always subject to punishment from men. For if they be, why does not the magistrate punish envy, hatred, and malice, and all uncharitableness? If you answer, because they are not capable of judicial proofs: I think I may say it is as easy to prove a man guilty of envy, hatred, or uncharitableness, as it is to prove him guilty of "rejecting the true religion tendered him with sufficient evidence of the truth of it." But if it be his duty to punish all offences against God; why does the magistrate never punish lying, which is an offence against God, and is an offence capable of being judicially proved? It is plain therefore that it is not the sense of all mankind, that it is the magistrate's duty to punish all offences against God; and where it is not his duty to use force, you will grant the magistrate is not to use it in matters of religion; because where it is necessary, it is his duty to use it; but where it is not necessary, you yourself say, it is not lawful. It would be convenient therefore for you to reform your proposition from that loose generality it now is in, and then prove it, before it can be allowed you to be to your purpose; though it be

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ever so true, that "you know not a greater crime a man can be guilty of, than rejecting the true religion."

You go on with your proof, that so long as men reject the true religion, &c. so long they offend, and consequently may justly be punished: "Because, say you, it is impossible for any man innocently to reject the true religion so tendered to him. For whoever rejects that religion so tendered does either apprehend and perceive the truth of it, or he does not. If he does, I know not what greater crime any man can be guilty of. If he does not perceive the truth of it, there is no account to be given of that, but either that he shuts his eyes against the evidence which is offered him, and will not at all consider it; or that he does not consider it as he ought, viz. with such care as is requisite, and with a sincere desire to learn the truth; either of which does manifestly involve him in guilt. To say here that a man who has the true religion proposed to him, with sufficient evidence of its truth, may consider it as he ought," or do his utmost in considering, "and yet not perceive the truth of it; is neither more nor less, than to say, that sufficient evidence is not sufficient evidence. For what does any man mean by sufficient evidence, but such as will certainly win assent wherever it is duly considered?"

I shall not trouble myself here to examine when requisite care, duly considered, and such other words, which bring one back to the same place from whence one set out, are cast up, whether all this fine reasoning will amount to any thing but begging what is in the question; but shall only tell you, that what you say here and in other places about sufficient evidence, is built upon this, that the evidence wherewith a man proposes the true religion, he may know to be such, as will not fail to gain the assent of whosoever does what lies in him in considering it. This is the supposition, without which all your talk of sufficient evidence will do you no service, try it where you will. But it is a supposition that is far enough from carrying with it

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sufficient evidence to make it be admitted without proof.

Whatever gains any man's assent, one may be sure had sufficient evidence in respect of that man: but that is far enough from proving it evidence sufficient to prevail on another, let him consider it as long and as much as he can. The tempers of men's minds; the principles settled there by time and education, beyond the power of the man himself to alter them; the different capacities of men's understandings, and the strange ideas they are often filled with; are so various and uncertain, that it is impossible to find that evidence, especially in things of a mixed disquisition, depending on so long a train of consequences, as some points of the true religion may, which one can confidently say will be sufficient for all men. It is demonstration that 31876 is the product of 9487172 divided by 297, and yet I challenge you to find one man of a thousand, to whom you can tender this proposition with demonstrative or sufficient evidence to convince him of the truth of it in a dark room; or ever to make this evidence appear to a man, that cannot write and read, so as to make him embrace it as a truth, if another, whom he hath more confidence in, tells him it is not so. All the demonstrative evidence the thing has, all the tender you can make of it, all the consideration he can employ about it, will never be able to discover to him that evidence which shall convince him it is true, unless you will at threescore and ten, for that may be the case, have him neglect his calling, go to school, and learn to write, and read, and cast accounts, which he may never be able to attain to.

You speak more than once of men's being brought to lay aside their prejudices to make them consider as they ought, and judge right of matters in religion; and I grant without doing so they cannot: but it is impossible for force to make them do it, unless it could show them, which are prejudices in their minds, and distinguish them from the truths there. Who is there almost that has not prejudices, that he does not know to be so; and what can force do in that case? It can no more remove

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them, to make way for truth, than it can remove one truth to make way for another; or rather remove an established truth, or that which is looked on as an unquestionable principle, (for so are often men's prejudices) to make way for a truth not yet known, nor appearing to be one. It is not every one knows, or can bring himself to Des Cartes's way of doubting, and strip his thoughts of all opinions, till he brings them to self-evident principles, and then upon them builds all his future tenets.

Do not think all the world, who are not of your church, abandon themselves to an utter carelessness of their future state. You cannot but allow there are many Turks who sincerely seek truth, to whom yet you could never bring evidence sufficient to convince them of the truth of the Christian religion, whilst they looked on it as a principle not to be questioned, that the Koran was of divine revelation. This possibly you will tell me is a prejudice, and so it is; but yet if this man shall tell you it is no more a prejudice in him, than it is a prejudice in any one amongst Christians, who having not examined it, lays it down as an unquestionable principle of his religion, that the Scripture is the word of God; what will you answer to him? And yet it would shake a great many Christians in their religion, if they should lay by that prejudice, and suspend their judgment of it, until they had made it out to themselves with evidence sufficient to convince one who is not prejudiced in favour of it; and it would require more time, books, languages, learning, and skill, than falls to most men's share to establish them therein; if you will not allow them, in this so distinguishing and fundamental a point, to rely on the learning, knowledge, and judgment of some persons whom they have in reverence or admiration. This though you blame it as an ill way, yet you can allow in one of your own religion, even to that degree, that he may be ignorant of the grounds of his religion. And why then may you not allow it to a Turk, not as a good way, or as having led him to the truth; but as a way as fit for him, as for one of your church to acquiesce

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in; and as fit to exempt him from your force, as to exempt any one of your church from it?

To prevent your commenting on this, in which you have shown so much dexterity, give me leave to tell you, that for all this I do not think all religions equally true or equally certain. But this I say, is impossible for you or me or any man to know, whether another has done his duty in examining the evidence on both sides, when he embraces that side of the question, which we perhaps upon other views, judge false: and therefore we can have no right to punish or persecute him for it. In this, whether and how far any one is faulty, must be left to the Searcher of hearts, the great and righteous Judge of all men, who knows all their circumstances, all the powers and workings of their minds; where it is they sincerely follow, and by what default they at any time miss truth: and he, we are sure, will judge uprightly.

But when one man shall think himself a competent judge, that the true religion is proposed with evidence sufficient for another; and thence shall take upon him to punish him as an offender, because he embraces not, upon evidence that he the proposer judges sufficient, the religion that he judges true; he had need be able to look into the thoughts of men, and know their several abilities; unless he will make his own understanding and faculties to be the measure of those of all mankind; which if they be no higher elevated, no larger in their comprehension, no more discerning than those of some men, he will not only be unfit to be a judge in that, but in almost any case whatsoever.

But since, 1. You make it a condition to the making a man an offender in not being of the true religion, that it has been tendered him with sufficient evidence; 2. Since you think it so easy for men to determine when the true religion has been tendered to any one with sufficient evidence; and 3. Since you pronounce "it impiety to say that God hath not furnished mankind with competent means for the promoting his own honour in the world, and the good of souls;" give me leave to ask you a question or two. 1. Can any one

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be saved without embracing the one only true religion? 2. Were any of the Americans of that one only true religion, when the Europeans first came amongst them? 3. Whether any of the Americans, before the Christians came amongst them, had offended in rejecting the true religion tendered with sufficient evidence? When you have thought upon, and fairly answered these questions, you will be fitter to determine how competent a judge man is, what is sufficient evidence; who do offend in not being of the true religion; and what punishments they are liable to for it.

But methinks here, where you spend almost a whole page upon the crime of rejecting the true religion duly tendered, and the punishment that is justly due to it from the magistrate, you forget yourself, and the foundation of your plea for force; which is, that it is necessary: when you are so far from proving it to be so in this case of punishing the offence of rejecting the true religion, that in this very page you distinguished it from what is necessary, where you tell us, "your design does rather oblige you to consider how long men may need punishment, than how long it may be just to punish them." So that though they offend, yet if they do not need punishment, the magistrate cannot use it, if you ground, as you say you do, the lawfulness of force for promoting the true religion upon the necessity of it. Nor can you say that by his commission from the law of nature of doing good, the magistrate, besides reducing his wandering subjects out of the wrong into the right way, is appointed also to be the avenger of God's wrath on unbelievers, or those that err in matters of religion. This at least you thought not fit to own in the first draught of your scheme; for I do not remember, in all your Argument Considered, one word of crime or punishment: nay, in writing this second treatise, you were so shy of owning any thing of punishment, that to my remembrance, you scrupulously avoided the use of that word, till you came to this place; and always where the repeating my words did not oblige you to it, carefully used the term of penalties for it, as any one may observe who reads

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the preceding part of this letter of yours, which I am now examining. And you were so nice in the point, that three or four leaves backwards, where I say, By your rule dissenters must be punished, you mend it, and say, "or if I please, subjected to moderate penalties." But here when the inquiry, how long force was to be continued on men, showed the absurdity of that pretence, that they were to be punished on without end, to make them consider; rather than part with your beloved force, you open the matter a little farther, and profess directly the punishing men for their religion. For though you do all you can to cover it under the name of rejecting the true religion duly proposed; yet it is in truth no more but being of a religion different from yours, that you would have them punished for: for all that the author pleads for, and you can oppose in writing against him, is toleration of religion. Your scheme therefore being thus mended, your hypothesis enlarged, being of a different religion from the national found criminal, and punishments found justly to belong to it; it is to be hoped, that in good time your punishments may grow too, and be advanced to all those degrees you in the beginning condemned; when having considered a little farther, you cannot miss finding, that the obstinacy of the criminals does not lessen their crime, and therefore justice will require severer execution to be done upon them.

But you tell us here, "Because your design does rather oblige you to consider how long men may need punishment, than how long it may be just to punish them; therefore you shall add, that as long as men refuse to embrace the true religion, so long penalties are necessary for them to dispose them to consider and embrace it: and that therefore, as justice allows, so charity requires, that they be kept subject to penalties, till they embrace the true religion." Let us therefore see the consistency of this with other parts of your hypothesis, and examine it a little by them.

Your doctrine is, that where entreaties and admonitions upon trial do not prevail, punishments are to be used; but they must be moderate. Moderate punish-

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ments have been tried, and they prevail not; what now is to be done? Are not greater to be used? No. For what reason? Because those whom moderate penalties will not prevail on being desperately perverse and obstinate, remedies are not to be provided for the incurable, as you tell us in the page immediately preceding.

Moderate punishments have been tried upon a man once, and again, and a third time, but prevail not at all, make no impression; they are repeated as many times more, but are still found ineffectual: pray tell me a reason why such a man is concluded so desperately perverse and obstinate, that greater degrees will not work upon him; but yet not so desperately perverse and obstinate, but that the same degrees repeated may work upon him? I will not urge here, that this is to pretend to know the just degree of punishment that will or will not work on any one; which I should imagine a pretty intricate business: but this I have to say, that if you can think it reasonable and useful to continue a man several years, nay his whole life, under the same repeated punishments, without going any higher, though they work not at all; because it is possible some time or other they may work on him; why is it not as reasonable and useful, I am sure it is much more justifiable and charitable, to leave him all his life under the means, which all agree God has appointed, without going any higher; because it is not impossible that some time or other preaching, and a word spoken in due season, may work upon him? For why you should despair of the success of preaching and persuasion upon a fruitless trial, and thereupon think yourself authorized to use force; and yet not so despair of the success of moderate force, as after years of fruitless trial to continue it on, and not to proceed to higher degrees of punishment; you are concerned for the vindication of your system to show a reason.

I mention the trial of preaching and persuasion, to show the unreasonableness of your hypothesis, supposing such a trial made: not that in yours, or the common method, there is or can be a fair trial made what preach-

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ing and persuasion can do. For care is taken by punishments and ill treatment to indispose and turn away men's minds, and to add aversion to their scruples; an excellent way to soften men's inclinations, and temper them for the impression of arguments and entreaties; though these too are only talked of: for I cannot but wonder to find you mention, as you do, giving ear to admonitions, entreaties, and persuasions, when these are seldom if ever made use of, but in places where those who are to be wrought on by them are known to be out of hearing; nor can be expected to come there, till by such means they have been wrought on.

It is not without reason therefore you cannot part with your penalties, and would have no end put to your punishments, but continue them on; since you leave so much to their operation, and make so little use of other means to work upon dissenters.

CHAPTER VI.

Of the End for which Force is to be used.

He that should read the beginning of your Argument Considered, would think it in earnest to be your design to have force employed to make men seriously consider, and nothing else; but he that shall look a little farther into it, and to that add also your defence of it, will find by the variety of ends you design your force for, that either you know not well what you would have it for; or else, whatever it was you aimed at, you called it still by that name which best fitted the occasion, and would serve best in that place to recommend the use of it.

You ask me, "Whether the mildness and gentleness of the Gospel destroys the coactive power of the magistrate?" I answer, as you supposed, No: upon which you infer, "Then it seems the magistrate may

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use his coactive power, without offending against the mildness and gentleness of the Gospel." Yes, where he has commission and authority to use it. "And so, say you, it will consist well enough with the mildness and gentleness of the Gospel for the magistrate to use his coactive power to procure them" [I suppose you mean the ministers and preachers of the national religion] "a hearing where their prayers and entreaties will not do it." No, it will not consist with the gentle and mild method of the Gospel, unless the Gospel has directed it, or something else to supply its want, till it could be had. As for miracles, which you pretend to have supplied the want of force in the first ages of Christianity, you will find that considered in another place. But, sir, show me a country where the ministers and teachers of the national and true religion go about with prayers and entreaties to procure a hearing, and cannot obtain it; and there I think I need not stand with you for the magistrate to use force to procure it them; but that I fear will not serve your turn.

To show the inconsistency and impracticableness of your method, I had said, "Let us now see to what end they must be punished: sometimes it is, To bring them to consider those reasons and arguments which are proper and sufficient to convince them: of what? That it is not easy to set Grantham steeple upon Paul's church? Whatever it be you would have them convinced of, you are not willing to tell us; and so it may be any thing. Sometimes it is, To incline them to lend an ear to those who tell them they have mistaken their way, and offer to show them the right. Which is, to lend an ear to all who differ from them in religion, as well crafty seducers as others. Whether this be for the procuring the salvation of their souls, the end for which you say this force is to be used, judge you. But this I am sure, whoever will lend an ear to all who will tell them they are out of the way, will not have much time for any other business.

"Sometimes it is, To recover men to so much sobriety and reflection, as seriously to put the question

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to themselves, whether it be really worth their while to undergo such inconveniencies for adhering to a religion which, for any thing they know, may be false; or for rejecting another (if that be the case) which, for aught they know, may be true; till they have brought it to the bar of reason, and given it a fair trial there. Which, in short, amounts to thus much, viz. To make them examine whether their religion be true, and so worth the holding, under those penalties that are annexed to it. Dissenters are indebted to you for your great care of their souls. But, what, I beseech you, shall become of those of the national church every where, which make far the greater part of mankind, who have no such punishments to make them consider; who have not this only remedy provided for them, but are left in that deplorable condition you mention, of being suffered quietly, and without molestation, to take no care at all of their souls, or in doing of it to follow their own prejudices, humours, or some crafty seducers? Need not those of the national church, as well as others, bring their religion to the bar of reason, and give it a fair trial there? And if they need to do so, as they must, if all national religions cannot be supposed true, they will always need that which you say is the only means to make them do so. So that if you are sure, as you tell us, that there is need of your method, I am sure there is as much need of it in national churches as any other. And so, for aught I can see, you must either punish them or let others alone; unless you think it reasonable that the far greater part of mankind should constantly be without that sovereign and only remedy, which they stand in need of equally with other people.

"Sometimes the end for which men must be punished is, to dispose them to submit to instruction, and to give a fair hearing to the reasons offered for the enlightening their minds, and discovering the truth to them. If their own words may be taken for it, there are as few dissenters as conformists, in any country, who will not profess they have done, and do this. And

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if their own words may not be taken, who, I pray, must be judge? You and your magistrates? If so, then it is plain you punish them not to dispose them to submit to instruction, but to your instruction; not to dispose them to give a fair hearing to reasons offered for the enlightening their minds, but to give an obedient hearing to your reasons. If you mean this, it had been fairer and shorter to have spoken out plainly, than thus in fair words, of indefinite signification, to say that which amounts to nothing. For what sense is it to punish a man to dispose him to submit to instruction, and give a fair hearing to reasons offered for the enlightening his mind and discovering truth to him, who goes two or three times a week several miles on purpose to do it, and that with the hazard of his liberty or purse, unless you mean your instructions, your reasons, your truth? Which brings us but back to what you have disclaimed, plain persecution for differing in religion.

"Sometimes this is to be done, To prevail with men to weigh matters of religion carefully and impartially. Discountenance and punishment put into one scale, with impunity and hopes of preferment put into the other, is as sure a way to make a man weigh impartially, as it would be for a prince to bribe and threaten a judge to make him judge uprightly.

"Sometimes it is, To make men bethink themselves, and put it out of the power of any foolish humour, or unreasonable prejudice, to alienate them from truth and their own happiness. Add but this, to put it out of the power of any humour or prejudice of their own, or other men's, and I grant the end is good, if you can find the means to procure it. But why it should not be put out of the power of other men's humour or prejudice, as well as their own, wants, and will always want, a reason to prove. Would it not, I beseech you, to an indifferent bystander, appear humour or prejudice, or something as bad, to see men, who profess a religion revealed from heaven, and which they own contains all in it necessary to salvation, ex-

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clude men from their communion, and persecute them with the penalties of the civil law, for not joining in the use of ceremonies, which are nowhere to be found in that revealed religion? Would it not appear humour or prejudice, or some such thing, to a sober, impartial heathen, to see Christians exclude and persecute one of the same faith, for things which they themselves confess to be indifferent, and not worth the contending for? Prejudice, humour, passion, lusts, impressions of education, reverence and admiration of persons, worldly respects, love of their own choice, and the like; to which you justly impute many men's taking up and persisting in their religion, are indeed good words; and so, on the other side, are these following, truth, the right way, enlightening, reason, sound judgment; but they signify nothing at all to your purpose, till you can evidently and unquestionably show the world, that the latter, truth and the right way, &c. are always, and in all countries, to be found only in the national church; and the former, viz. passion and prejudice, &c. only amongst the dissenters. But to go on:

"Sometimes it is, To bring men to take such care as they ought of their salvation. What care is such as men ought to take, whilst they are out of your church, will be hard for you to tell me. But you endeavour to explain yourself in the following words: that they may not blindly leave it to the choice neither of any other person, nor yet of their own lusts and passions, to prescribe to them what faith or worship they shall embrace. You do well to make use of punishment to shut passion out of the choice: because you know fear of suffering is no passion. But let that pass. You would have men punished, to bring them to take such care of their salvation, that they may not blindly leave it to the choice of any other person to prescribe to them. Are you sincere? Are you in earnest? Tell me, then, truly: did the magistrate or the national church, any where, or yours in particular, ever punish any man to bring him to have this care, which, you say, he ought to take of his salvation? Did

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you ever punish any man, that he might not blindly leave it to the choice of his parish priest, or bishop, or the convocation, what faith or worship he should embrace? It will be suspected care of a party, or any thing else, rather than care of the salvation of men's souls; if, having found out so useful, so necessary a remedy, the only method there is room left for, you will apply it but partially, and make trial of it only on those whom you have truly least kindness for. This will unavoidably give one reason to imagine, you do not think so well of your remedy as you pretend, who are so sparing of it to your friends, but are very free of it to strangers, who in other things are used very much like enemies. But your remedy is like the helleboraster that grew in the woman's garden, for the cure of worms in her neighbours' children; for truly it wrought too roughly to give it to any of her own. Methinks your charity, in your present persecution, is much-what as prudent, as justifiable, as that good woman's. I hope I have done you no injury, that I here suppose you of the church of England; if I have, I beg your pardon. It is no offence of malice, I assure you: for I suppose no worse of you, than I confess of myself.

"Sometimes this punishment that you contend for, is to bring men to act according to reason and sound judgment:

Tertius è cœlo cecidit Cato.

"This is reformation indeed. If you can help us to it, you will deserve statues to be erected to you, as to the restorer of decayed religion. But if all men have not reason and sound judgment, will punishment put it into them? Besides, concerning this matter mankind is so divided, that he acts according to reason and sound judgment at Augsburg, who would be judged to do quite the contrary at Edinburgh. Will punishment make men know what is reason and sound judgment? If it will not, it is impossible it should make

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them act according to it. Reason and sound judgment are the elixir itself, the universal remedy; and you may as reasonably punish men to bring them to have the philosopher's stone, as to bring them to act according to reason and sound judgment.

"Sometimes it is, To put men upon a serious and impartial examination of the controversy between the magistrate and them, which is the way for them to come to the knowledge of the truth. But what if the truth be on neither side, as I am apt to imagine you will think it is not, where neither the magistrate nor the dissenter is either of them of your church, how will the examining the controversy between the magistrate and him be the way to come to the knowledge of the truth? Suppose the controversy between a Lutheran and a papist; or, if you please, between a presbyterian magistrate and a quaker subject; will the examining the controversy between the magistrate and the dissenting subject, in this case, bring him to the knowledge of the truth? If you say, Yes, then you grant one of these to have the truth on his side. For the examining the controversy between a presbyterian and a quaker, leaves the controversy either of them has with the church of England, or any other church, untouched. And so one, at least, of those being already come to the knowledge of the truth, ought not to be put under your discipline of punishment, which is only to bring him to the truth. If you say, No, and that the examining the controversy between the magistrate and the dissenter, in this case, will not bring him to the knowledge of the truth, you confess your rule to be false, and your method to no purpose.

"To conclude, your system is, in short, this: You would have all men, laying aside prejudice, humour, passion, &c. examine the grounds of their religion, and search for the truth. This, I confess, is heartily to be wished. The means that you propose to make men do this, is that dissenters should be punished to make them do so. It is as if you had said, men generally

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are guilty of a fault; therefore let one sect, who have the ill luck to be of an opinion different from the magistrate, be punished. This, at first sight, shocks any one who has the least spark of sense, reason, or justice. But having spoken of this already, and concluding that, upon second thoughts, you yourself will be ashamed of it; let us consider it put so as to be consistent with common sense, and with all the advantage it can bear, and then let us see what you can make of it. Men are negligent in examining the religions they embrace, refuse, or persist in; therefore it is fit they should be punished to make them do it. This is a consequence, indeed, which may, without defiance to common sense, be drawn from it. This is the use, the only use, which you think punishment can, indirectly and at a distance, have in matters of religion. You would have men by punishments driven to examine. What? Religion. To what end? To bring them to the knowledge of the truth. But I answer,

"First, Every one has not the ability to do this.

"Secondly, Every one has not the opportunity to do it.

"Would you have every poor protestant, for example, in the palatinate, examine thoroughly whether the pope be infallible, or head of the church; whether there be a purgatory; whether saints are to be prayed to, or the dead prayed for; whether the Scripture be the only rule of faith; whether there be no salvation out of the church; and whether there be no church without bishops; and an hundred other things in controversy between the papists and those protestants: and, when he had mastered these, go on to fortify himself against the opinions and objections of other churches he differs from? This, which is no small task, must be done, before a man can have brought his religion to the bar of reason, and given it a fair trial there. And if you will punish men till this be done, the countryman must leave off ploughing and sowing, and betake himself to the study of Greek and Latin; and the artizan must sell his tools, to buy fathers and

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schoolmen, and leave his family to starve. If something less than this will satisfy you, pray tell me what is enough. Have they considered and examined enough, if they are satisfied themselves where the truth lies? If this be the limits of their examination, you will find few to punish; unless you will punish them to make them do what they have done already. For, however he came by his religion, there is scarce any one to be found who does not own himself satisfied that he is in the right. Or else, must they be punished to make them consider and examine, till they embrace that which you choose for truth? If this be so, what do you but in effect choose for them? when yet you would have men punished, to bring them to such a care of their souls that no other person might choose for them? If it be truth in general you would have them by punishments driven to seek, that is to offer matter of dispute, and not a rule of discipline. For to punish any one to make him seek till he find truth, without a judge of truth, is to punish for you know not what; and is all one as if you should whip a scholar to make him find out the square root of a number you do not know. I wonder not, therefore, that you could not resolve with yourself what degree of severity you would have used, nor how long continued; when you dare not speak out directly whom you would have punished, and are far from being clear to what end they should be under penalties.

"Consonant to this uncertainty, of whom, or what, to be punished, you tell us, that there is no question of the success of this method. Force will certainly do, if duly proportioned to the design of it.

"What, I pray, is the design of it? I challenge you, or any man living, out of what you have said in your book, to tell me directly what it is. In all other punishments that ever I heard of yet, till now that you have taught the world a new method, the design of them has been to cure the crime they are denounced against; and so I think it ought to be here. What, I beseech you, is the crime here? Dissenting? That

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you say not, any where, is a fault. Besides you tell us, that the magistrate hath not an authority to compel any one to his religion. And that you do not require that men should have no rule but the religion of the country. And the power you ascribe to the magistrate is given him to bring men, not to his own, but to the true religion. If dissenting be not the fault, is it that a man does not examine his own religion, and the grounds of it? Is that the crime your punishments are designed to cure? Neither that dare you say, lest you displease more than you satisfy with your new discipline. And then again, as I said before, you must tell us how far you would have them examine, before you punish them for not doing it. And I imagine, if that were all we required of you, it would be long enough before you would trouble us with a law that should prescribe to every one how far he was to examine matters of religion; wherein if he failed, and came short, he was to be punished; if he performed, and went in his examination to the bounds set by the law, he was acquitted and free. Sir, when you consider it again, you will perhaps think this a case reserved to the great day, when the secrets of all hearts shall be laid open. For I imagine it is beyond the power or judgment of man, in that variety of circumstances, in respect of parts, tempers, opportunities, helps, &c. men are in, in this world, to determine what is every one's duty in this great business of search, inquiry, examination, or to know when any one has done it. That which makes me believe you will be of this mind, is, that where you undertake for the success of this method, if rightly used, it is with a limitation, upon such as are not altogether incurable. So that when your remedy is prepared according to art (which art is yet unknown) and rightly applied, and given in a due dose (all which are secrets), it will then infallibly cure. Whom? All that are not incurable by it. And so will a pippin-posset, eating fish in Lent, or a presbyterian lecture, certainly cure all that are not incurable by them. For I am sure

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you do not mean it will cure all, but those who are absolutely incurable; because you yourself allow one means left of cure, when yours will not do; viz. The grace of God. Your words are, what means is there left (except the grace of God) to reduce them, but to lay thorns and briars in their way? And here also, in the place we were considering, you tell us the incurable are to be left to God. Whereby, if you mean they are to be left to those means he has ordained for men's conversion and salvation, yours must never be made use of: for he indeed has prescribed preaching and hearing of his word; but as for those who will not hear, I do not find any where that he has commanded that they should be compelled or beaten to it."

I must beg my reader's pardon for so long a repetition, which I was forced to, that he might be judge whether what I there said either deserves no answer, or be fully answered in that paragraph, where you undertake to vindicate your method from all impracticableness and inconsistency chargeable upon it, in reference to the end for which you would have men punished. Your words are: For what? By which, you say, "you perceive I mean two things: for sometimes I speak of the fault, and sometimes of the end for which men are to be punished; (and sometimes I plainly confound them.) Now, if it be inquired, for what fault men are to be punished? you answer, for rejecting the true religion, after sufficient evidence tendered them of the truth of it; which certainly is a fault, and deserves punishment. But if I inquire for what end such as do reject the true religion are to be punished; you say, to bring them to embrace the true religion; and in order to that to bring them to consider, and that carefully and impartially, the evidence which is offered to convince them of the truth of it, which are undeniably just and excellent ends; and which, through God's blessing, have often been procured, and may yet be procured by convenient penalties inflicted for that purpose. Nor do you know of any thing I say against any part of this, which is not already answered."

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Whether I in this confound two things distinct, or you distinguish where there is no difference, the reader may judge by what I have said elsewhere. I shall here only consider the ends of punishing, you here again in your reply to me assign; and those, as I find them scattered, are these:

Sometimes you speak of this end, as if it were "barely to gain a hearing to those who by prayers and intreaty cannot:" and those may be the preachers of any religion. But I suppose you mean the preachers of the true religion. And who, I beseech you, must be judge of that?

"Where the law provides sufficient means of instruction for all, as well as punishment for dissenters, it is plain to all concerned, that the punishment is intended to make them consider." What? The means the law provides for their instruction. Who then is judge of what they are to be instructed in, and the means of instruction, but the law-maker?

"It is to bring men to hearken to instruction." From whom? From any body? "And to consider and examine matters of religion as they ought to do, and to bring those who are out of the right way to hear, consider, and embrace the truth." When is this end attained, and the penalties which are the means to this end taken off? When a man conforms to the national church. And who then is judge of what is the truth, to be embraced, but the magistrate?

"It is to bring men to consider those reasons and arguments which are proper and sufficient to convince them; but which, without being forced, they would not consider." And when have they done this? When they have once conformed: for after that there is no force used to make them consider farther.

"It is to make men consider as they ought;" and that, you tell us, is so to consider, "as to be moved heartily to embrace, and not to reject, truth necessary to salvation." And when is the magistrate, that has the care of men's souls, and does all this for their salvation, satisfied that they have so considered? As

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soon as they outwardly join in communion with the national church.

"It is to bring men to consider and examine those controversies which they are bound to consider and examine: *i. e.* those wherein they cannot err without dishonouring God, and endangering their own and other men's salvations. And to study the true religion with such care and diligence as they might and ought to use, and with an honest mind." And when, in your opinion, is it presumable that any man has done all this? Even when he is in the communion of your church.

"It is to cure men's unreasonable prejudices and refractoriness against, and aversion to, the true religion." Whereof none retain the least tincture or suspicion, who are once got within the pale of your church.

"It is to bring men into the right way, into the way of salvation," which force does, when it has conducted them within the church-porch, and there leaves them.

"It is to bring men to embrace the truth that must save them." And here in the paragraph wherein you pretend to tell us for what force is to be used, you say, "It is to bring men to embrace the true religion, and in order to that to bring them to consider, and that carefully and impartially, the evidence which is offered to convince them of the truth of it, which, as you say, are undeniably just and excellent ends;" but yet such as force in your method can never practically be made a means to, without supposing what you say you have no need to suppose; viz. that your religion is the true; unless you had rather everywhere leave it to the magistrate to judge which is the right way, what is the true religion; which supposition, I imagine, will less accommodate you than the other. But take which of them you will, you must add this other supposition to it, harder to be granted you than either of the former; viz. that those who conform to your church here, if you make yourself the judge, or to the national church any where, if you make the magistrate judge

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of the truth that must save men, and those only, have attained these ends.

The magistrate, you say, is obliged to do what in him lies to bring all his subjects "to examine carefully and impartially matters of religion, and to consider them as they ought; i. e. so as to embrace the truth that must save them." The proper and necessary means, you say, to attain these ends is force. And your method of using this force is to punish all the dissenters from the national religion, and none of those who outwardly conform to it. Make this practicable now in any country in the world, without allowing the magistrate to be judge what is the truth that must save them, and without supposing also, that whoever do embrace the outward profession of the national religion, do in their hearts embrace, *i. e.* believe and obey the truth, that must save them; and then I think nothing in government can be too hard for your undertaking.

You conclude this paragraph in telling me, "You do not know of any thing, I say, against any part of this, which is not already answered." Pray tell me where it is you have answered those objections I made to those several ends which you assigned in your Argument Considered, and for which you would have force used, and which I have here reprinted again, because I do not find you so much as take notice of them: and therefore the reader must judge whether they needed any answer or no.

But to show that you have not here, where you promise and pretend to do it, clearly and directly told us for what force and penalties are to be used, I shall in the next chapter examine what you mean "by bringing men to embrace the true religion."

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CHAPTER VII.

Of your bringing Men to the true Religion.

True religion is on all hands acknowledged to be so much the concern and interest of all mankind, that nothing can be named, which so much effectually bespeaks the approbation and favour of the public. The very entitling one's self to that sets a man on the right side. Who dares question such a cause, or oppose what is offered for the promoting the true religion? This advantage you have secured to yourself from inattentive readers as much as by the often repeated mention of the true religion is possible; there being scarce a page wherein the true religion does not appear, as if you had nothing else in your thoughts but the bringing men to it for the salvation of their souls. Whether it be so in earnest, we will now see.

You tell us, "Whatever hardships some false religions may impose, it will, however, always be easier to carnal and worldly-minded men, to give even their first-born for their transgressions, than to mortify the lusts from which they spring, which no religion but the true requires of them." Upon this you ground the necessity of force to bring men to the true religion, and charge it on the magistrate as his duty to use it to that end. What now in appearance can express greater care to bring men to the true religion? But let us see what you say in p. 64, and we shall find that in your scheme nothing less is meant: there you tell us, "The magistrate inflicts the penalties only upon them that break the laws:" and that law requiring nothing but conformity to the national religion, none but nonconformists are punished. So that unless an outward profession of the national religion be by the mortification of men's lusts, harder than their giving their first-

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born for their transgressions, all the penalties you contend for concern not, nor can be intended to bring men effectually to the true religion; since they leave them before they come to the difficulty, which is to mortify their lusts, as the true religion requires. So that your bringing men to the true religion being to bring them to conformity to the national, for then you have done with force; how far that outward conformity is from being heartily of the true religion, may be known by the distance there is between the easiest and the hardest thing in the world. For there is nothing easier, than to profess in words; nothing harder, than to subdue the heart, and bring thoughts and deeds into obedience of the truth: the latter is what is required to be of the true religion; the other all that is required by penalties, your way applied. If you say, conformists to the national religion are required by the law civil and ecclesiastical to lead good lives, which is the difficult part of the true religion—I answer, these are not the laws we are here speaking of, nor those which the defenders of toleration complain of; but the laws that put a distinction between outward conformists and nonconformists: and those they say, whatever may be talked of the true religion, can never be meant to bring men really to the true religion, as long as the true religion is, and is confessed to be, a thing of so much greater difficulty than outward conformity.

Miracles, say you, supplied the want of force in the beginning of Christianity; and therefore, so far as they supplied that want, they must be subservient to the same end. The end then, was to bring men into the Christian church; into which they were admitted and received as brethren, when they acknowledged that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God. Will that serve the turn? No: force must be used to make men embrace creeds and ceremonies; *i. e.* outwardly conform to the doctrine and worship of your church. Nothing more than that is required by your penalties; nothing less than that will excuse from punishment: that, and nothing but that, will serve the turn; that therefore,

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and only that, is what you mean by the true religion you would have force used to bring men to.

When I tell you, "You have a very ill opinion of the religion of the Church of England, and must own it can only be propagated and supported by force, if you do not think it would be a gainer by a general toleration all the world over:" you ask, "Why you may not have as good an opinion of the Church of England's, as you have of Noah's religion, notwithstanding you think it cannot now be propagated or supported without using some kinds or degrees of force." When you have proved that Noah's religion, that from eight persons spread and continued in the world till the apostles' times, as I have proved in another place, was propagated and supported all that while by your kinds or degrees of force, you may have some reason to think as well of the religion of the Church of England as you have of Noah's religion; though you think it cannot be propagated and supported without some kinds or degrees of force. But till you can prove that, you cannot upon that ground say you have reason to have so good an opinion of it.

You tell me, "If I will take your word for it, you assure me you think there are many other countries in the world besides England, where my toleration would be as little useful to truth as in England." If you will name those countries, which will be no great pains, I will take your word for it, that you believe toleration there would be prejudicial to truth: but if you will not do that, neither I nor any body else can believe you. I will give you a reason why I say so, and that is, because nobody can believe that, upon your principles, you can allow any national religion, differing from that of the Church of England, to be true; and where the national religion is not true, we have already your consent (as in Spain and Italy, &c.) for toleration. Now that you cannot, without renouncing your own principles, allow any national religion, differing from that established here by law, to be true, is evident: For why do you punish nonconformists here? "To bring them, say you, to the true religion." But what

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if they hold nothing, but what that other differing national church does, shall they be nevertheless punished if they conform not? You will certainly say, yes: and if so, then you must either say, they are not of the true religion; or else you must own you punish those, to bring them to the true religion, whom you allow to be of the true religion already.

You tell me, "If I own with our author, that there is but one true religion, and I owning myself to be of the Church of England, you cannot see how I can avoid supposing, that the national religion now in England, backed by the public authority of the law, is the only true religion." If I own, as I do, all that you here expect from me, yet it will not serve to draw that conclusion from it which you do; viz. that the national religion now in England is the only true religion; taking the true religion in the sense that I do, and you ought to take it. I grant that there is but one true religion in the world, which is that whose doctrine and worship are necessary to salvation. I grant too, that the true religion, necessary to salvation, is taught and professed in the Church of England: and yet it will not follow from hence that the religion of the Church of England, as established by law, is the only true religion; if there be any thing established in the Church of England by law, and made part of its religion, which is not necessary to salvation, and which any other church, teaching and professing all that is necessary to salvation, does not receive.

If the national religion now in England, backed by the authority of the law, be, as you would have it, the only true religion; so the only true religion, that a man cannot be saved without being of it; pray reconcile this with what you say in the immediately preceding paragraph; viz. "that there are many other countries in the world where my toleration would be as little useful as in England." For if there be other national religions differing from that of England, which you allow to be true, and wherein men may be saved, the national religion of England, as now established by law, is not the only true religion, and men may be

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saved without being of it. And then the magistrate can upon your principles have no authority to use force to bring men to be of it. For you tell us, force is not lawful, unless it be necessary; and therefore the magistrate can never lawfully use it, but to bring men to believe and practise what is necessary to salvation. You must therefore either hold, that there is nothing in the doctrine, discipline, and ceremonies of the church of England, as it is established by law, but what is necessary to salvation: or else you must reform your terms of communion, before the magistrate, upon your principles, can use penalties to make men consider till they conform; or you can say that the national religion of England is the only true religion, though it contain the only true religion in it; as possibly most, if not all, the differing Christian churches now in the world do.

You tell us farther, in the next paragraph, "That wherever this only true religion, *i. e.* the national religion now in England, is received, all other religions ought to be discouraged." Why, I beseech you, discouraged, if they be true any of them? For if they be true, what pretence is there for force to bring men who are of them to the true religion? If you say all other religions, varying at all from that of the church of England, are false; we know then your measure of the one only true religion. But that your care is only of conformity to the church of England, and that by the true religion you mean nothing else, appears too from your way of expressing yourself in this passage, where you own that you suppose that as this only true religion, to wit, the national religion now in England, backed with the public authority of law, "ought to be received wherever it is preached; so wherever it is received, all other religions ought to be discouraged in some measure by the civil powers." If the religion established by law in England be the only true religion, ought it not to be preached and received every where, and all other religions discouraged throughout the world? and ought not the magistrates of all countries to take care that it should be so? But you only say, wherever it is preached it ought to be received; and

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wherever it is received, other religions ought to be discouraged, which is well suited to your scheme for enforcing conformity in England, but could scarce drop from a man whose thoughts were on the true religion, and the promoting of it in other parts of the world.

Force then must be used in England, and penalties laid on dissenters there. For what? "to bring them to the true religion," whereby it is plain you mean not only the doctrine but discipline and ceremonies of the church of England, and make them a part of the only true religion: why else do you punish all dissenters for rejecting the true religion, and use force to bring them to it? when yet a great, if not the greatest, part of dissenters in England own and profess the doctrine of the church of England, as firmly as those in the communion of the church of England. They therefore, though they believe the same religion with you, are excluded from the true church of God, that you would have men brought to, and are amongst those who reject the true religion.

I ask whether they are not in your opinion out of the way of salvation, who are not joined in communion with the true church? and whether there can be any true church without bishops? If so, all but conformists in England that are of any church in Europe, beside the Lutherans and papists, are out of the way of salvation; and so according to your system have need of force to be brought into it: and these too, one for their doctrine of transubstantiation, the other for that of consubstantiation, to omit other things vastly differing from the church of England, you will not, I suppose, allow to be of the true religion: and who then are left of the true religion but the church of England? For the Abyssines have too wide a difference in many points for me to imagine, that is one of those places you mean where toleration would do harm as well as in England. And I think the religion of the Greek church can scarce be supposed by you to be the true. For if it should, it would be a strong instance against your assertion, that the true religion cannot subsist, but would quickly be effectually extirpated without the assistance of authority;

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since this has subsisted without any such assistance now above two hundred years. I take it then for granted, and others with me cannot but do the same; till you tell us, what other religion there is of any church, but that of England, which you allow to be the true religion; that all you say of bringing men to the true religion, is only bringing them to the religion of the church of England. If I do you an injury in this, it will be capable of a very easy vindication: for it is but naming that other church differing from that of England, which you allow to have the true religion, and I shall yield myself convinced, and shall allow these words, viz. "The national religion now in England, backed by the public authority of law, being the only true religion," only as a little hasty sally of your zeal. In the mean time I shall argue with you about the use of force to bring men to the religion of the church of England, as established by law: since it is more easy to know what that is, than what you mean by the true religion, if you mean any thing else.

To proceed therefore; in the next place I tell you, by using force your way to bring men to the religion of the church of England, you mean only to bring them to an outward profession of that religion; and that, as I have told you elsewhere, because force used your way, being applied only to dissenters, and ceasing as soon as they conform, (whether it be intended by the lawmaker for any thing more or no, which we have examined in another place) cannot be to bring men to any thing more than outward conformity. For if force be used to dissenters, and them only, to bring men to the true religion, and always, as soon as it has brought men to conformity, it be taken off, and laid aside, as having done all is expected from it; it is plain, that by bringing men to the true religion, and bringing them to outward conformity, you mean the same thing. You use and continue force upon dissenters, because you expect some effect from it: when you take it off, it has wrought that effect, or else, being in your power, why do you not continue it on? The effect then that you talk of being the embracing the true religion, and the thing you are

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satisfied with, without any further punishment, expectation, or inquiry, being outward conformity, it is plain embracing the true religion and outward conformity, with you, are the same things.

Neither can you say it is presumable that those who outwardly conform do really understand, and inwardly in their hearts embrace with a lively faith and a sincere obedience; the truth that must save them. 1. Because it being, as you tell us, the magistrate's duty to do all that in him lies for the salvation of all his subjects, and it being in his power to examine, whether they know and live suitable to the truth that must save them, as well as conform; he can or ought no more to presume that they do so, without taking an account of their knowledge and lives, than he can or ought to presume that they conform, without taking any account of their coming to church. Would you think that physician discharged his duty, and had, as was pretended, a care of men's lives; who having got them into his hands, and knowing no more of them but that they come once or twice a week to the apothecary's shop, to hear what is prescribed them, and sit there a while; should say it was presumable they were recovered, without ever examining whether his prescriptions had any effect, or what estate their health was in?

2. It cannot be presumable, where there are so many visible instances to the contrary. He must pass for an admirable presumer, who will seriously affirm that it is presumable that all those who conform to the national religion, where it is true, do so understand, believe, and practise it, as to be in the way of salvation.

3. It cannot be presumable, that men have parted with their corruption and lusts to avoid force, when they fly to conformity, which can shelter them from force without quitting their lusts. That which is dearer to men than their first-born is, you tell us, their lusts; that which is harder than the hardships of false religions is the mortifying those lusts: here lies the difficulty of the true religion, that it requires the mortifying of those lusts; and till that be done, men are not of the true religion, nor in the way of salvation: and it is upon this

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account only that you pretend force to be needful. Force is used to make them hear: it prevails; men hear: but that is not enough, because the difficulty lies not in that; they may hear arguments for the truth, and yet retain their corruption. They must do more; they must consider those arguments. Who requires it of them? The law that inflicts the punishment does not; but this we may be sure their love of their lusts, and their hatred of punishment, requires of them, and will bring them to, viz. to consider how to retain their beloved lusts, and yet to avoid the uneasiness of the punishment they lie under; this is presumable they do; therefore they go one easy step farther, they conform, and then they are safe from force, and may still retain their corruption. Is it therefore presumable they have parted with their corruption, because force has driven them to take sanctuary against punishment in conformity, where force is no longer to molest them, or pull them from their darling inclinations? The difficulty in religion is, you say, for men to part with their lusts; this makes force necessary: men find out a way by conforming to avoid force without parting with their lusts; therefore it is presumable when they conform, that force, which they can avoid without quitting their lusts, has made them part with them; which is indeed not to part with their lusts because of force, but to part with them gratis; which if you can say is presumable, the foundation of your need of force, which you place in the prevalency of corruption, and men's adhering to their lusts, will be gone, and so there will be no need of force at all. If the great difficulty in religion be for men to part with, or mortify their lusts, and the only counterbalance in the other scale, to assist the true religion, to prevail against their lusts, be force; which, I beseech you, is presumable, if they can avoid force, and retain their lusts, that they should quit their lusts, and heartily embrace the true religion, which is incompatible with them; or else that they should avoid the force, and retain their lusts? To say the former of these, is to say that it is presumable, that they will quit their lusts, and heartily embrace the true religion for its own sake:

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for he that heartily embraces the true religion, because of a force which he knows he can avoid at pleasure, without quitting his lusts, cannot be said so to embrace it, because of that force: since a force he can avoid, without quitting his lusts, cannot be said to assist truth in making him quit them: for in this truth has no assistance from it at all. So that this is to say there is no need of force at all in the case.

Take a covetous wretch, whose heart is so set upon money, that he would give his first-born to save his bags; who is pursued by the force of the magistrate to an arrest, and compelled to hear what is alleged against him; and the prosecution of the law threatening imprisonment or other punishment, if he do not pay the just debt which is demanded of him: if he enters himself in the King's Bench, where he can enjoy his freedom without paying the debt, and parting with his money; will you say that it is presumable he did it to pay the debt, and not to avoid the force of the law? The lust of the flesh and pride of life are as strong and prevalent as the lust of the eye: and if you will deliberately say again, that it is presumable, that men are driven by force to consider, so as to part with their lusts, when no more is known of them, but that they do what discharges them from the force, without any necessity of parting with their lusts; I think I shall have occasion to send you to my pagans and Mahometans, but shall have no need to say any thing more to you of this matter myself.

I agree with you, that there is but one only true religion; I agree too that that one only true religion is professed and held in the church of England; and yet I deny, if force may be used to bring men to that true religion, that upon your principles it can lawfully be used to bring men to the national religion in England, as established by law; because force, according to your own rule, being only lawful because it is necessary, and therefore unfit to be used where not necessary, *i. e.* necessary to bring men to salvation; it can never be lawfully used to bring a man to any thing that is not necessary to salvation, as I have more fully shown in

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another place. If therefore in the national religion of England, there be any thing put in as necessary to communion, that is, though true, yet not necessary to salvation; force cannot be lawfully used to bring men to that communion, though the thing so required in itself may perhaps be true.

There be a great many truths contained in Scripture, which a man may be ignorant of, and consequently not believe, without any danger to his salvation, or else very few would be capable of salvation: for I think I may truly say, there was never any one, but he that was the Wsdom of the Father, who was not ignorant of some, and mistaken in others of them. To bring men therefore to embrace such truths, the use of force, by your own rule, cannot be lawful: because the belief or knowledge of those truths themselves not being necessary to salvation, there can be no necessity men should be brought to embrace them, and so no necessity to use force to bring men to embrace them.

The only true religion which is necessary to salvation, may in one national church have that joined with it which in itself is manifestly false and repugnant to salvation; in such a communion no man can join without quitting the way to salvation. In another national church, with this only true religion may be joined what is neither repugnant nor necessary to salvation; and of such there may be several churches differing from one another in confessions, ceremonies, and discipline, which are usually called different religions; with either or each of which a good man, if satisfied in his own mind, may communicate without danger, whilst another, not satisfied in conscience concerning something in the doctrine, discipline, or worship, cannot safely, nor without sin, communicate with this or that of them. Nor can force be lawfully used, on your principles, to bring any man to either of them; because such things are required to their communion, which not being requisite to salvation, men may seriously and conscientiously differ, and be in doubt about, without endangering their souls.

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That which here raises a noise, and gives a credit to it, whereby many are misled into an unwarrantable zeal, is, that these are called different religions; and every one thinking his own the true, the only true, condemns all the rest as false religions. Whereas those who hold all things necessary to salvation, and add not thereto any thing in doctrine, discipline, or worship, inconsistent with salvation, are of one and the same religion, though divided into different societies or churches, under different forms: which whether the passion and polity of designing, or the sober and pious intention of well-meaning men, set up, they are no other than the contrivances of men, and such they ought to be esteemed in whatsoever is required in them, which God has not made necessary to salvation, however in its own nature it may be indifferent, lawful, or true. For none of the articles or confessions of any church, that I know, containing in them all the truths of religion, though they contain some that are not necessary to salvation; to garble thus the truths of religion, and by their own authority take some not necessary to salvation, and make them the terms of communion, and leave out others as necessary to be known and believed, is purely the contrivance of men; God never having appointed any such distinguishing system: nor, as I have showed, can force, upon your principles, lawfully be used to bring men to embrace it.

Concerning ceremonies, I shall here only ask you whether you think kneeling at the Lord's supper, or the cross in baptism, are necessary to salvation? I mention these as having been matter of great scruple: if you will not say they are, how can you say that force can be lawfully used to bring men into a communion, to which these are made necessary? If you say, Kneeling is necessary to a decent uniformity, (for of the cross in baptism I have spoken elsewhere) though that should be true, yet it is an argument you cannot use for it, if you are of the church of England: for if a decent uniformity may be well enough preserved without kneeling at prayer, where decency requires it at least as

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much as at receiving the sacrament, why may it not well enough be preserved without kneeling at the sacrament? Now that uniformity is thought sufficiently preserved without kneeling at prayer, is evident by the various postures men are at liberty to use, and may be generally observed, in all our congregations, during the minister's prayer in the pulpit before and after his sermon, which it seems can consist well enough with decency and uniformity; though it be a prayer addressed to the great God of heaven and earth; to whose majesty it is that the reverence to be expressed in our gestures is due, when we put up petitions to him, who is invariably the same, in what or whose words soever we address ourselves to him.

The preface to the Book of Common Prayer tells us, "That the rites and ceremonies appointed to be used in divine worship, are things in their own nature indifferent and alterable." Here I ask you, whether any human power can make any thing, in its own nature indifferent, necessary to salvation? If it cannot, then neither can any human power be justified in the use of force, to bring men to conformity in the use of such things. If you think men have authority to make any thing, in itself indifferent, a necessary part of God's worship, I shall desire you to consider what our author says of this matter, which has not yet deserved your notice.

"The misapplying his power, you say, is a sin in the magistrate, and lays him open to divine vengeance." And is it not a misapplying of his power, and a sin in him, to use force to bring men to such a compliance in an indifferent thing, which in religious worship may be a sin to them? Force, you say, may be used to punish those who dissent from the communion of the church of England. Let us suppose now all its doctrines not only true, but necessary to salvation; but that there is put into the terms of its communion some indifferent action which God has not enjoined, nor made a part of his worship, which any man is persuaded in his conscience not to be lawful; suppose kneeling at the sacrament, which having been superstitiously used

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in adoration of the bread, as the real body of Christ, may give occasion of scruple to some now, as well as eating of flesh offered to idols did to others in the apostles' time; which though lawful in itself, yet the apostle said "he would eat no flesh while the world standeth, rather than to make his weak brother offend," 1 Cor. viii. 13. And if to lead, by example, the scrupulous into any action, in itself indifferent, which they thought unlawful, be a sin, as appears at large, Rom. xiv. how much more is it to add force to our example, and to compel men by punishments to that, which, though indifferent in itself, they cannot join in without sinning! I desire you to show me how force can be necessary in such a case, without which you acknowledge it not to be lawful. Not to kneel at the Lord's supper, God not having ordained it, is not a sin; and the apostles' receiving it in the posture of sitting or lying, which was then used at meat, is an evidence it may be received not kneeling. But to him that thinks kneeling is unlawful, it is certainly a sin. And for this you may take the authority of a very judicious and reverend prelate of our church, in these words; "Where a man is mistaken in his judgment, even in that case, it is always a sin to act against it; by so doing, he wilfully acts against the best light which at present he has for the direction of his actions." Disc. of Conscience, p. 18. I need not here repeat his reasons, having already quoted him above more at large; though the whole passage, writ, as he uses, with great strength and clearness, deserves to be read and considered. If therefore the magistrate enjoins such an unnecessary ceremony, and uses force to bring any man to a sinful communion with our church in it, let me ask you, doth he sin or misapply his power or no?

True and false religions are names that easily engage men's affections on the hearing of them; the one being the aversion, the other the desire, at least as they persuade themselves, of all mankind. This makes men forwardly give into these names, wherever they meet with them; and when mention is made of bringing men from a false to the true religion, very often without

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knowing what is meant by those names, they think nothing can be done too much in such a business, to which they entitle God's honour, and the salvation of men's souls.

I shall therefore desire of you, if you are that fair and sincere lover of truth you profess, when you write again, to tell us what you mean by true, and what by a false religion, that we may know which in your sense are so: for, as you now have used these words in your treatise, one of them seems to stand only for the religion of the church of England, and the other for that of all other churches. I expect here you should make the same outcries against me, as you have in your former letter, for imposing a sense upon your words contrary to your meaning; and for this you will appeal to your own words in some other places: but of this I shall leave the reader to judge, and tell him, this is a way very easy and very usual for men, who having not clear and consistent notions, keep themselves as much as they can under the shelter of general and variously applicable terms; that they may save themselves from the absurdities or consequences of one place, by a help from some general or contrary expression in another: whether it be a desire of victory, or a little too warm zeal for a cause you have been hitherto persuaded of, which hath led you into this way of writing; I shall only mind you, that the cause of God requires nothing, but what may be spoken out plainly in a clear determined sense, without any reserve or cover. In the mean time this I shall leave with you as evident, that force, upon your ground, cannot be lawfully used to bring men to the communion of the church of England; (that being all that I can find you clearly mean by the true religion) till you have proved that all that is required of one in that communion, is necessary to salvation.

However therefore you tell us, "That convenient force, used to bring men to the true religion, is all that you contend for, and all that you allow." That it is for "promoting the true religion." That it is to "bring men to consider, so as not to reject the truth necessary to salvation. To bring men to embrace the truth that

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must save them." And abundance more to this purpose. Yet all this talk of the true religion amounting to no more but the national religion established by law in England; and your bringing men to it, to no more than bringing them to an outward profession of it; it would better have suited that condition, viz. without prejudice, and with an honest mind, which you require in others, to have spoke plainly what you aimed at, rather than prepossess men's minds in favour of your cause, by the impressions of a name that in truth did not properly belong to it.

It was not therefore without ground that I said, "I suspected you built all on this lurking supposition, that the national religion now in England, backed by the public authority of the law, is the only true religion, and therefore no other is to be tolerated; which being a supposition equally unavoidable, and equally just in other countries; unless we can imagine, that, every where but in England, men believe what at the same time they think to be a lie," &c. Here you erect your plumes, and to this your triumphant logic gives you not patience to answer, without an air of victory in the entrance: "How, sir, is this supposition equally unavoidable, and equally just in other countries, where false religions are the national? (for that you must mean, or nothing to the purpose.)" Hold, sir; you go too fast. Take your own system with you, and you will perceive it will be enough to my purpose, if I mean those religions which you take to be false; for if there be any other national churches, which, agreeing with the church of England in what is necessary to salvation, yet have established ceremonies different from those of the church of England; should not any one who dissented here from the church of England upon that account, as preferring that to our way of worship, be justly punished? If so, then punishment in matters of religion being only to bring men to the true religion, you must suppose him not to be yet of it, and so the national church he approves of not to be of the true religion. And yet is it not equally unavoidable, and equally just, that that church should suppose its religion

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the only true religion, as it is that yours should do so; it agreeing with yours in things necessary to salvation, and having made some things, in their own nature indifferent, requisite to conformity for decency and order, as you have done? So that my saying, It is equally unavoidable, and equally just in other countries, will hold good, without meaning what you charge on me, that that supposition is equally unavoidable, and equally just, where the national religion is absolutely false.

But in that large sense too, what I said will hold good; and you would have spared your useless subtilties against it, if you had been as willing to take my meaning, and answer my argument, as you were to turn what I said to a sense which the words themselves show I never intended. My argument in short was this, That granting force to be useful to propagate and support religion, yet it would be no advantage to the true religion, that you, a member of the church of England, supposing yours to be the true religion, should thereby claim a right to use force; since such a supposition, to those who were members of other churches, and believed other religions, was equally unavoidable, and equally just. And the reason I annexed shows both this to be my meaning, and my assertion to be true: my words are, "Unless we can imagine that, every where but in England, men believe what at the same time they think to be a lie." Having therefore never said, nor thought that it is equally unavoidable, or equally just, that men in every country should believe the national religion of the country: but that it is equally unavoidable, and equally just, that men believing the national religion of their country, be it true or false, should suppose it to be true; and let me here add also, should endeavour to propagate it: however you go on thus to reply: "If so, then I fear it will be equally true too, and equally rational: for otherwise I see not how it can be equally unavoidable, or equally just; for if it be not equally true, it cannot be equally just; and if it be not equally rational, it cannot be equally unavoidable. But if it be equally true, and equally rational, then either all religions

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are true, or none is true: for if they be all equally true, and one of them be not true, then none of them can be true." I challenge any one to put these four good words, unavoidable, just, rational, and true, more equally together, or to make a better-wrought deduction: but after all, my argument will nevertheless be good, that it is no advantage to your cause, for you or any one of it, to suppose yours to be the only true religion; since it is equally unavoidable, and equally just for any one, who believes any other religion, to suppose the same thing. And this will always be so, till you can show, that men cannot receive false religions upon arguments that appear to them to be good; or that having received falsehood under the appearance of truth, they can, whilst it so appears, do otherwise than value it, and be acted by it, as if it were true. For the equality that is here the question, depends not upon the truth of the opinion embraced; but on this, that the light and persuasion a man has at present, is the guide which he ought to follow, and which in his judgment of truth he cannot avoid to be governed by. And therefore the terrible consequences you dilate on in the following part of that page I leave you for your private use on some fitter occasion.

You therefore who are so apt, without cause, to complain of want of ingenuity in others; will do well hereafter to consult your own, and another time change your style; and not under the undefined name of the true religion, because that is of more advantage to your argument, mean only the religion established by law in England, shutting out all other religions now professed in the world. Though when you have defined what is the true religion, which you would have supported and propagated by force; and have told us it is to be found in the liturgy and thirty-nine articles of the church of England; and it be agreed to you, that that is the only true religion; your argument of force, as necessary to men's salvation, from the want of light and strength enough in the true religion to prevail against men's lusts, and the corruption of their nature, will not hold; because your bringing men by force, your way applied,

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to the true religion, be it what you will, is but bringing them to an outward conformity to the national church. But the bringing them so far, and no farther, having no opposition to their lusts, no inconsistency with their corrupt nature, is not on that account at all necessary, nor does at all help, where only, on your grounds, you say, there is need of the assistance of force towards their salvation.

CHAPTER VIII.

Of Salvation to be procured by Force, your Way.

There cannot be imagined a more laudable design than the promoting the salvation of men's souls, by any one who shall undertake it: but if it be a pretence made use of to cover some other by-interest, nothing can be more odious to men, nothing more provoking to the great God of heaven and earth, nothing more misbecoming the name and character of a Christian. With what intention you took your pen in hand to defend and encourage the use of force in the business of men's salvation, it is fit in charity we take your word; but what your scheme, as you have delivered it, is guilty of, it is my business to take notice of, and represent to you.

To my saying, that "if persecution, as is pretended, were for the salvation of men's souls, bare conformity would not serve the turn, but men should be examined whether they do it upon reason and conviction:" you answer, "Who they be that pretend that persecution is for the salvation of men's souls, you know not." Whatever you know not, I know one, who in the letter under consideration pleads for force, as useful for the promoting "the salvation of men's souls: and that the use of force is no other means for the salvation of men's

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souls, than what the Author and Finisher of our faith has directed. That so far is the magistrate, when he gives his helping hand to the furtherance of the Gospel, by laying convenient penalties upon such as reject it, or any part of it, from using any other means for the salvation of men's souls than what the Author and Finisher of our faith has directed, that he does no more than his duty for the promoting the salvation of souls. And as the means by which men may be brought into the way of salvation." Ay, but where do you say that persecution is for the salvation of souls? I thought you had been arguing against my meaning, and against the things I say, and not against my words in your meaning, which is not against me. That I used the word persecution for what you call force and penalties, you know: for in p. 21, that immediately precedes this, you take notice of it, with some little kind of wonder, in these words, "persecutions, so it seems you call all punishments for religion." That I do so then, whether properly or improperly, you could not be ignorant; and then, I beseech you, apply your answer here to what I say. My words are, "If persecution, as is pretended, were for the salvation of men's souls, men that conform would be examined whether they did so upon reason and conviction." Change my word persecution into punishment for religion, and then consider the truth or ingenuity of your answer: for, in that sense of the word persecution, do you know nobody that pretends persecution is for the salvation of men's souls? So much for your ingenuity, and the arts you allow yourself to serve a good cause. What do you think of one of my pagans or Mahometans? Could he have done better? For I shall often have occasion to mind you of them. Now to your argument. I said, "That I thought those who make laws, and use force, to bring men to church-conformity in religion, seek only the compliance, but concern themselves not for the conviction of those they punish, and so never use force to convince. For pray tell me, when any dissenter conforms, and enters into the church com-

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munion, is he ever examined to see whether he does it upon reason and conviction, and such grounds as would become a Christian concerned for religion? If persecution, as is pretended, were for the salvation of men's souls, this would be done, and men not driven to take the sacrament to keep their places, or obtain licences to sell ale; for so low have these holy things been prostituted." To this you here reply, "As to those magistrates, who having provided sufficiently for the instruction of all under their care, in the true religion, do make laws, and use moderate penalties, to bring men to the communion of the church of God, and conformity to the rules and orders of it; I think their behaviour does plainly enough speak them to seek and concern themselves for the conviction of those whom they punish, and for their compliance only as the fruit of their conviction." If means of instruction were all that is necessary to convince people, the providing sufficiently for instruction would be an evidence, that those that did so, did seek and concern themselves for men's conviction: but if there be something as necessary for conviction as the means of instruction, and without which those means will signify nothing, and that be severe and impartial examination; and if force be, as you say, so necessary to make men thus examine, that they can by no other way but force be brought to do it: if magistrates do not lay their penalties on non-examination, as well as provide means of instruction; whatever you may say you think, few people will find reason to believe you think those magistrates seek and concern themselves much for the conviction of those they punish, when that punishment is not levelled at that, which is a hinderance to their conviction, *i. e.* against their aversion to severe and impartial examination. To that aversion no punishment can be pretended to be a remedy, which does not reach and combat the aversion; which it is plain no punishment does, which may be avoided without parting with, or abating the prevalency of that aversion. This is the case, where men undergo punishments for not conforming, which

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they may be rid of, without severely and impartially examining matters of religion.

To show that what I mentioned was no sign of unconcernedness in the magistrate for men's conviction, you add, "Nor does the contrary appear from the not examining dissenters when they conform, to see whether they do it upon reason and conviction: for where sufficient instruction is provided, it is ordinarily presumable that when dissenters conform, they do it upon reason and conviction." Here if ordinarily signifies any thing, (for it is a word you make much use of, whether to express or cover your sense, let the reader judge,) then you suppose there are cases wherein it is not presumable; and I ask you, whether in those, or any cases, it be examined whether dissenters, when they conform, do it upon reason and conviction? At best that it is ordinarily presumable, is but *gratis dictum;* especially since you suppose, that it is the corruption of their nature that hinders them from considering as they ought, so as upon reason and conviction to embrace the truth: which corruption of nature, that they may retain with conformity I think is very presumable. But be that as it will, this I am sure is ordinarily and always presumable, that if those who use force were as intent upon men's conviction as they are on their conformity, they would not wholly content themselves with the one, without ever examining and looking into the other.

Another excuse you make for this neglect is, "That as to irreligious persons, who only seek their secular advantage, how easy it is for them to pretend conviction, and to offer such grounds (if that were required) as would become a Christian concerned for religion; that is what no care of man can certainly prevent." This is an admirable justification of your hypothesis. Men are to be punished: to what end? To make them severely and impartially consider matters of religion, that they may be convinced, and thereupon sincerely embrace the truth. But what need of force or punishment for this? Because their lusts and corrup-

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tions will otherwise keep them both from considering as they ought, and embracing the true religion; and therefore they must lie under penalties till they have considered as they ought, which is when they have upon conviction embraced. But how shall the magistrate know when they upon conviction embrace, that he may then take off their penalties? That indeed cannot be known, and ought not to be inquired after, because irreligious persons, who only seek their secular advantage, or, in other words, all those who desire at their ease to retain their beloved lusts and corruption, may "easily pretend conviction, and offer such grounds (if it were required) as would become a Christian concerned for religion: this is what no care of man can certainly prevent." Which is reason enough, why no busy forwardness in man to disease his brother, should use force upon pretence of prevailing against men's corruptions, that hinder their considering and embracing the truth upon conviction, when it is confessed it cannot be known, whether they have considered, are convinced, or have really embraced the true religion or no. And thus you have shown us your admirable remedy, which is not, it seems, for the irreligious (for it is easy, you say, for them to pretend to conviction, and so avoid punishment), but for those who would be religious without it.

But here, in this case, as to the intention of the magistrate, how can it be said, that the force he uses is designed, by subduing men's corruptions, to make way for considering and embracing the truth; when it is so applied, that it is confessed here, that a man may get rid of the penalties without parting with the corruptions they are pretended to be used against? But you have a ready answer, "This is what no care of man can certainly prevent;" which is but in other words to proclaim the ridiculousness of your use of force, and to avow that your method can do nothing. If by not certainly you mean, it may any way or to any degree prevent; why is it not so done? If not, why is a word that signifies nothing put in, unless it be for a shelter

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on occasion? a benefit you know how to draw from this way of writing: but this here, taken how you please, will only serve to lay blame on the magistrate, or your hypothesis, choose you whether. I, for my part, have a better opinion of the ability and management of the magistrate: what he aimed at in his laws, that I believe he mentions in them; and, as wise men do in business, spoke out plainly what he had a mind should be done. But certainly there cannot a more ridiculous character be put on law-makers, than to tell the world they intended to make men consider, examine, &c. but yet neither required nor named any thing in their laws but conformity. Though yet when men are certainly to be punished for not really embracing the true religion, there ought to be certain matters of fact, whereby those that do, and those that do not so embrace the truth, should be distinguished; and for that you have, it is true, a clear and established criterion, *i. e.* conformity and non-conformity: which do very certainly distinguish the innocent from the guilty; those that really and sincerely do embrace the truth that must save them, from those that do not.

But, sir, to resolve the question, whether the conviction of men's understandings, and the salvation of their souls, be the business and aim of those who use force to bring men into the profession of the national religion; I ask, whether, if that were so, there could be so many as there are, not only in most country parishes, but, I think I may say, may be found in all parts of England, grossly ignorant in the doctrines and principles of the Christian religion, if a strict inquiry were made into it? If force be necessary to be used to bring men to salvation, certainly some part of it would find out some of the ignorant and unconsidering that are in the national church, as well as it does so diligently all the non-conformists out of it, whether they have considered, or are knowing or no. But to this you give a very ready answer: "Would you have the magistrate punish all indifferently, those who obey the law as well as them that do not?" What is the obedience the law

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requires? That you tell us in these words, "If the magistrate provides sufficiently for the instruction of all his subjects in the true religion, and then requires them all, under convenient penalties, to hearken to the teachers and ministers of it, and to profess and exercise it with one accord under their direction in public assemblies:" which in other words is but conformity; which here you express a little plainer in these words: "But as to those magistrates who, having provided sufficiently for the instruction of all under their care in the true religion, do make laws, and use moderate penalties to bring men to the communion of the church of God, and to conform to the rules and orders of it." You add, "Is there any pretence to say that in so doing, he [the magistrate] applies force only to a part of his subjects, when the law is general, and excepts none?" There is no pretence, I confess, to say that in so doing he applies force only to a part of his subjects, to make them conformists; from that it is plain the law excepts none. But if conformists may be ignorant, grossly ignorant of the principles and doctrines of Christianity; if there be no penalties used to make them consider as they ought, so as to understand, be convinced of, believe and obey the truths of the Gospel; are not they exempt from that force which you say "is to make men consider and examine matters of religion as they ought to do?" Force is applied to all indeed to make them conformists; but if being conformists once, and frequenting the places of public worship, and there showing an outward compliance with the ceremonies prescribed (for that is all the law requires of all, call it how you please), they are exempt from all force and penalties, though they are ever so ignorant, ever so far from understanding, believing, receiving the truth of the Gospel; I think it is evident that then force is not applied to all "to procure the conviction of the understanding.—To bring men to consider those reasons and arguments which are proper to convince the mind, and which, without being forced, they would not consider. —To bring men to that consideration, which nothing

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else but force (besides the extraordinary grace of God) would bring them to.—To make men good Christians. —To make men receive instruction.—To cure their aversion to the true religion.—To bring men to consider and examine the controversies which they are bound to consider and examine, *i. e.* those wherein they cannot err without dishonouring God, and endangering their own and other men's eternal salvation.—To weigh matters of religion carefully and impartially.—To bring men to the true religion and to salvation."—That then force is not applied to all the subjects for these ends, I think you will not deny. These are the ends for which you tell us, in the places quoted, that force is to be used in matters of religion: it is by its usefulness and necessity to these ends, that you tell us the magistrate is authorized and obliged to use force in matters of religion. Now if all these ends be not attained by a bare conformity, and yet if by a bare conformity men are wholly exempt from all force and penalties in matters of religion; will you say that for these ends force is applied to all the magistrate's subjects? If you will, I must send you to my pagans and Mahometans for a little conscience and modesty. If you confess force is not applied to all for these ends, notwithstanding any laws obliging all to conformity; you must also confess, that what you say concerning the laws being general, is nothing to the purpose; since all that are under penalties for not conforming, are not under any penalties for ignorance, irreligion, or the want of those ends for which you say penalties are useful and necessary.

You go on, "And therefore if such persons profane the sacrament to keep their places, or to obtain licences to sell ale, this is a horrible wickedness." I excuse them not. "But it is their own, and they alone must answer for it." Yes, and those who threatened poor ignorant and irreligious ale-sellers, whose livelihood it was, to take away their licences, if they did not conform and receive the sacrament, may be thought, perhaps, to have something to answer for. You add, "But

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it is very unjust to impute it to those who make such laws, and use such force, or to say that they prostitute holy things, and drive men to profane them." Nor is it just to insinuate in your answer, as if that had been said which was not. But if it be true, that a poor, ignorant, loose, irreligious wretch should be threatened to be turned out of his calling and livelihood, if he would not take the sacrament: may it not be said these holy things have been so low prostituted? And if this be not profaning them, pray tell me what is?

This I think may be said without injustice to any body, that it does not appear that those who make strict laws for conformity, and take no care to have it examined upon what grounds men conform, are not very much concerned, that men's understandings should be convinced: and though you go on to say, that "they design by their laws to do what lies in them to make men good Christians;" that will scarce be believed, if what you say be true, that force is necessary to bring "those who cannot be otherwise brought to it, to study the true religion, with such care and diligence as they might and ought to use, and with an honest mind." And yet we see a great part, or any of those who are ignorant in the true religion, have no such force applied to them; especially since you tell us, in the same place, that "no man ever studied the true religion with such care and diligence as he might and ought to use, and with an honest mind, but he was convinced of the truth of it." If then force and penalties can produce that study, care, diligence, and honest mind, which will produce knowledge and conviction; and that (as you say in the following words) make good men; I ask you, if there be found in the communion of the church, exempt from force upon the account of religion, ignorant, irreligious, ill men; and that, to speak moderately, not in great disproportion fewer than amongst the nonconformists; will you believe yourself when you say "the magistrates do, by their laws, all that in them lies to make them good Christians;" when they use not that force to them which you, not I, say is necessary; and that they are, where it is necessary, obliged to use?

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And therefore I give you leave to repeat again the words you subjoin here, "But if after all they (*i. e.* the magistrates) can do, wicked and godless men will still resolve to be so; they will be so, and I know not who but God Almighty can help it." But this being spoken of conformists, on whom the magistrates lay no penalties, use no force for religion, give me leave to mind you of the ingenuity of one of my pagans or Mahometans.

You tell us, That the usefulness of force to make scholars learn, authorizes schoolmasters to use it. And would you not think a schoolmaster discharged his duty well, and had a great care of their learning, who used his rod only to bring boys to school; but if they come there once a week, whether they slept or only minded their play, never examined what proficiency they made, or used the rod to make them study and learn, though they would not apply themselves without it?

But to show you how much you yourself are in earnest for the salvation of souls in this your method, I shall set down what I said, p. 129, of my letter on that subject, and what you answer, p. 68, of yours.

L. II. p. 129. "You speak of it here as the most deplorable condition imaginable, that 'men should be left to themselves, and not be forced to consider and examine the grounds of their religion, and search impartially and diligently after the truth.' This you make the great miscarriage of mankind: and for this you seem solicitous, all through your treatise, to find out a remedy; and there is scarce a leaf wherein you do not offer yours. But what if, after all now, you should be found to prevaricate? 'Men have contrived to themselves,' say you, 'a great variety of religions:' it is granted. 'They seek not the

L. III. p. 68. Your next paragraph runs high, and charges me with nothing less than prevarication. For whereas, as you tell me, I speak of it here as the most deplorable condition imaginable, that men should be left to themselves, and not be forced to consider and examine the grounds of their religion, and search impartially and diligently after the truth, &c. It seems

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truth in this matter with that application of mind and freedom of judgment which is requisite:' it is confessed. 'All the false religions now on foot in the world have taken their rise from the slight and partial consideration, which men have contented themselves with, in searching after the true; and men take them up, and persist in them, for want of due examination:' be it so. 'There is need of a remedy for this; and I have found one whose success cannot be questioned:' very well. What is it? Let us hear it. 'Why, dissenters must be punished.' Can any body that hears you say so, believe you in earnest; and that want of examination is the thing you would have amended, when want of examination is not the thing you would have punished? If want of examination be the fault, want of examination must be punished; if you are, as you pretend, fully satisfied that punishment is the proper and only means to remedy it. But if, in all your treatise, you can show me one place where you say that the ignorant, the careless, the inconsiderate, the negligent in examining thoroughly the truth of their own and others' religion, &c. are to be punished, I will allow your remedy for a good one. But you have not said any thing like this; and which is more, I tell you beforehand, you dare not say it. And whilst you all the remedy I offer is no more than this: "Dissenters must be punished." Upon which thus you insult: "Can any body that hears you say so, believe you in earnest," &c. Now here I acknowledge, that though want or neglect of examination be a general fault, yet the method I propose for curing it does not reach to all that are guilty of it, but is limited to those who reject the true religion, proposed to them with sufficient evidence. But then, to let you see how little ground you have to say that I prevaricate in this matter, I shall only desire you to consider what it is that the author and myself were inquiring after: for it is not, what course is to be taken to confirm and establish those in the truth, who have already embraced it: nor, how they may be enabled to propagate it to others (for

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do not, the world has reason to judge, that however want of examination be a general fault, which you with great vehemency have exaggerated; yet you use it only for a pretence to punish dissenters; and either distrust your remedy, that it will not cure this evil, or else care not to have it generally cured. This evidently appears from your whole management of the argument. And he that reads your treatise with attention, will be more confirmed in this opinion, when he shall find that you, who are so earnest to have men punished, to bring them to consider and examine, that so they may discover the way of salvation, have not said one word of considering, searching, and hearkening to the Scripture; which had been as good a rule for a Christian to have sent them to, 'as to reasons and arguments proper to convince them' of you know not what; 'as to the instruction and government of the proper ministers of religion,' which who they are, men are yet far from being agreed; or 'as to the information of those who tell them they have mistaken their way, and offer to show them the right; and to the like uncertain and dangerous guides; which were not those that our Saviour and the apostles sent men to, but to the Scriptures.' 'Search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have both which purposes I have already acknowledged it very useful, and a thing much to be desired, that all such persons should, as far as they are able, search into the grounds upon which their religion stands, and challenges their belief); but the subject of our inquiry is only, what method is to be used, to bring men to the true religion. Now, if this be the only thing we were inquiring after (as you cannot deny it to be), then every one sees that in speaking to this point, I had nothing to do with any who have already embraced the true religion; because they are not to be brought to that religion, but only to be confirmed and edified in it; but was only to consider how those who reject it may be brought to embrace it. So that how much soever any of those who own the true religion may

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eternal life,' says our Saviour to the unbelieving, persecuting Jews, John v. 39. And it is the Scriptures which, St. Paul says, 'are able to make wise unto salvation,' 2 Tim. iii. 15.

"Talk no more therefore, if you have any care of your reputation, how much 'it is every man's interest not to be left to himself, without molestation, without punishment in matters of religion.' Talk not of 'bringing men to embrace the truth that must save them, by putting them upon examination.' Talk no more 'of force and punishment, as the only way left to bring men to examine.' It is evident you mean nothing less: for, though want of examination be the only fault you complain of, and punishment be in your opinion the only way to bring men to it; and this the whole design of your book; yet you have not once proposed in it, that those, who do not impartially examine, should be forced to it. And that you may not think I talk at random, when I say you dare not; I will, if you please, give you some reasons for my saying so.

"First, Because, if you propose that all should be punished, who are ignorant, who have not used 'such consideration as is apt and proper to manifest the truth; but have been determined in the choice of their religion by im- be guilty of neglect of examination, it is evident, I was only concerned to show how it may be cured in those who, by reason of it, reject the true religion, duly proposed or tendered to them. And certainly to confine myself to this, is not to prevaricate, unless to keep within the bounds which the question under debate prescribes me be to prevaricate.

In telling me therefore that "I dare not say that the ignorant, the careless, the inconsiderate, the negligent in examining, &c. (*i. e.* all that are such) are to be punished," you only tell me that I dare not be impertinent. And therefore I hope you will excuse me, if I take no notice of the three reasons you offer in your next page for your saying so. And yet if I had a mind to talk impertinently, I know not why I

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pressions of education, admiration of persons, worldly respects, prejudices, and the like incompetent motives; and have taken up their religion, without examining it as they ought;' you will propose to have several of your own church, be it what it will, punished; which would be a proposition too apt to offend too many of it, for you to venture on. For whatever need there be of reformation, every one will not thank you for proposing such an one as must begin at, or at least reach to, the house of God.

"Secondly, Because, if you should propose that all those who are ignorant, careless, and negligent in examining, should be punished, you would have little to say in this question of toleration: for if the laws of the state were made, as they ought to be, equal to all the subjects, without distinction of men of different professions in religion; and the faults to be amended by punishments were impartially punished in all who are guilty of them; this would immediately produce a perfect toleration, or show the uselessness of force in matters of religion. If therefore you think it so necessary, as you say, for the 'promoting of true religion, and the salvation of souls, that men should be punished to make them examine;' do but find a way to apply force might not have dared to do so, as well as other men.

There is one thing more in this paragraph, which, though nothing more pertinent than the rest, I shall not wholly pass over. It lies in these words: "He that reads your treatise with attention, will be more confirmed in this opinion." (viz. That I use want of examination only for a pretence to punish dissenters, &c.) "when he shall find that you, who are so earnest to have men punished, to bring them to consider and examine, that so they may discover the way of salvation, have not said one word of considering, searching, and hearkening to the Scripture; which had been as good a rule for a Christian to have sent them to, as to reasons and arguments proper to convince them of you know not what," &c.

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to all that have not thoroughly and impartially examined, and you have my consent. For though force be not the proper means of promoting religion, yet there is no better way to show the usefulness of it, than the applying it equally to miscarriages, in whomsoever found, and not to distinct parties or persuasions of men, for the reformation of them alone, when others are equally faulty.

"Thirdly, Because, without being for as large a toleration as the author proposes, you cannot be truly and sincerely for a free and impartial examination. For whoever examines, must have the liberty to judge, and follow his judgment; or else you put him upon examination to no purpose. And whether that will not as well lead men from, as to your church, is so much a venture, that, by your way of writing, it is evident enough you are loth to hazard it; and if you are of the national church, it is plain your brethren will not bear with you in the allowance of such a liberty. You must therefore either change your method; and if the want of examination be that great and dangerous fault you would have corrected, you must equally punish all that are equally guilty of any neglect in this matter; and then take your only means, your beloved force, How this confirms that opinion, I do not see; nor have you thought fit to instruct me. But as to the thing itself, viz. "my not saying one word of considering, searching, and hearkening to the Scripture;" whatever advantage a captious adversary may imagine he has in it, I hope it will not seem strange to any indifferent and judicious person, who shall but consider that throughout my treatise I speak of the true religion only in general, *i. e.* not as limited to any particular dispensation, or to the times of the Scriptures; but as reaching from the fall of Adam to the end of the world, and so comprehending the times which preceded the Scriptures; wherein yet God left not himself without witness, but furnished mankind with sufficient means of knowing him and

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and make the best of it; or else you must put off your mask, and confess that you design not your punishments to bring men to examination, but to conformity. For the fallacy you have used is too gross to pass upon this age."

his will, in order to their eternal salvation. For I appeal to all men of art, whether, speaking of the true religion under this generality, I could be allowed to descend to any such rules of it, as belong only to some particular times, or dispensations; such as you cannot but acknowledge the Old and New Testaments to be.

In this your answer, you say, "the subject of our inquiry is only what method is to be used to bring men to the true religion." He that reads what you say, again and again, "That the magistrate is empowered and obliged to procure, as much as in him lies, *i. e.* as far as by penalties it can be procured, that *no man* neglect his soul," and shall remember how many pages you employ, A. p. 6, &c. and here, p. 6, &c. to show that it is the corruption of human nature which hinders men from doing what they may and ought for the salvation of their souls; and that therefore penalties, no other means being left, and force were necessary to be used by the magistrate to remove these great obstacles of lusts and corruptions, that "none of his subjects might remain ignorant of the way of salvation, or refuse to embrace it." One would think "your inquiry had been after the means of *curing men's* aversion to the true religion, (which," you tell us, p. 53, "if not cured, is certainly destructive of men's eternal salvation") that so they might heartily embrace it for their salvation. But here you tell us, "your inquiry is only what method is to be used to bring men to the true religion:" whereby you evidently mean nothing but outward conformity to that which you think the true church, as appears by the next following words: "Now if this be the only thing we were inquiring after, then every one sees that in speak-

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ing to this point I had nothing to do with any who have already embraced the true religion." And also every one sees that since amongst those with whom (having already embraced the true religion) you and your penalties have nothing to do; there are those who have not considered and examined matters of religion as they ought, whose lusts and corrupt natures keep them as far alienated from believing, and as averse to a real obeying the truth that must save them, as any other men: it is manifest that embracing the true religion in your sense is only embracing the outward profession of it, which is nothing but outward conformity. And that being the farthest you would have your penalties pursue men, and there leave them with as much of their ignorance of the truth, and carelessness of their souls, as they please: who can deny but that it would be impertinent in you to consider how want of impartial examination, or aversion to the true religion, should in them be cured? Because they are none of those subjects of the commonwealth, whose spiritual and eternal interests are by political government to be procured or advanced: none of those subjects whose salvation the magistrate is to take care of.

And therefore I excuse you, as you desire, for not taking notice of my three reasons; but whether the reader will do so or no, is more than I can undertake. I hope you too will excuse me for having used so harsh a word as prevaricate, and impute it to my want of skill in the English tongue. But when I find a man pretend to a great concern for the salvation of men's souls, and make it one of the great ends of civil government, that the magistrate should make use of force to bring all his subjects to consider, study and examine, believe and embrace the truth that must save them; when I shall have to do with a man, who to this purpose hath writ two books to find out and defend the proper remedies for that general backwardness and aversion, which depraved human nature keeps men in, to an impartial search after, and hearty embracing the true religion; and who talks of nothing less than obligations on sovereigns, both from their particular duty, as well as from

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common charity, to take care that none of their subjects should want the assistance of this only means left for their salvation; nay, who has made it so necessary to men's salvation, that he talks as if the wisdom and goodness of God would be brought in question, if those who needed it should be destitute of it; and yet, notwithstanding all this show of concern for men's salvation, contrives the application of this sole remedy so, that a great many who lie under the disease should be out of the reach and benefit of his cure, and never have this only remedy applied to them: when this I say is so manifestly in his thoughts all the while, that he is forced to confess, "that, though want or neglect of examination be a general fault, yet the method he proposes for curing it does not reach to all that are guilty of it;" but frankly owns, that he was not concerned to show how the neglect of examination might be cured in those who conform, but only in those who by reason of it reject the true religion duly proposed to them; which rejecting the true religion will require a man of art to show to be here any thing but non-conformity to the national religion: when, I say, I meet with a man another time that does this, who is so much a man of art, as to talk of all, and mean but some; talk of hearty embracing the true religion, and mean nothing but conformity to the national: pretend one thing, and mean another; if you please to tell me what name I shall give it, I shall not fail: for who knows how soon again I may have an occasion for it?

If I would punish men for non-conformity without owning of it, I could not use a better pretence than to say it was to make them hearken to reasons and arguments proper to convince them, or to make them submit to the instruction and government of the proper ministers of religion, without any thing else; supposing still at the bottom the arguments for, and the ministers of my religion to be these, that till they outwardly complied with, they were to be punished. But if, instead of outward conformity to my religion, covered under these indefinite terms, I should tell them, they were to examine the Scripture, which was the fixed rule for

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them and me; not examining could not give me a pretence to punish them, unless I would also punish conformists, as ignorant and unversed in Scripture as they, which would not do my business.

But what need I use arguments to show, that your punishing to make men examine is designed only against dissenters, when, in your answer to this very paragraph of mine, you in plain words "acknowledge, that though want of examination be a general fault, yet the method you propose for curing does not reach to all that are guilty of it?" To which if you please to add what you tell us, that when dissenters conform, the magistrate cannot know, and therefore never examines whether they do it upon reason and conviction or no; though it be certain that, upon conforming, penalties, the necessary means, cease, it will be obvious, that, whatever be talked, conformity is all that is aimed at, and that want of examination is but the pretence to punish dissenters.

And this I told you any one must be convinced of, who observes that you, who are so earnest to have men punished to bring them to consider and examine, that so they may discover the way of salvation, have not said one word of considering, searching, and hearkening to the Scripture, which, you were told, was as good a rule for a Christian to have sent men to, as to "the instruction and government of the proper ministers of religion, or to the information of those who tell them they have mistaken their way, and offer to show them the right." For this passing by the Scripture you give us this reason, that "throughout your treatise you speak of the true religion only in general, *i. e.* not as limited to any particular dispensation, or to the times of the Scriptures, but as reaching from the fall of Adam to the end of the world, &c. And then you appeal to all men of art, whether speaking of the true religion, under this generality, you could be allowed to descend to any such rules of it as belong only to some particular times or dispensations, such as I cannot but acknowledge the Old and New Testaments to be."

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The author that you write against making it his business, as nobody can doubt who reads but the first page of his letter, to show that it is the duty of Christians to tolerate both Christians and others who differ from them in religion; it is pretty strange, in asserting against him that the magistrate might and ought to use force to bring men to the true religion, you should mean any other magistrate than the Christian magistrate, or any other religion than the Christian religion. But it seems you took so little notice of the design of your adversary, which was to prove that Christians were not to use force to bring any one to the Christian religion, that you would prove, that Christians were now to use force, not only to bring men to the Christian, but also to the Jewish religion; or that of the true church before the law, or to some true religion so general that it is none of these. "For," say you, "throughout your treatise you speak of the true religion only in general; *i. e.* not as limited to any particular dispensation:" though one that were not a man of art would suspect you to be of another mind yourself, when you told us, the shutting out of the Jews from the rights of the commonwealth "is a just and necessary caution in a Christian commonwealth;" which you say to justify your exception in the beginning of your "argument," against the largeness of the author's toleration, who would not have Jews excluded. But speak of the true religion only in general as much as you please, if your true religion be that by which men must be saved, can you send a man to any better guide to that true religion now than the Scripture?

If, when you were in your altitudes, writing the first book, your men of art could not allow you to descend to any such rule as the Scripture, (though even there you acknowledge the severities spoken against are such as are used to make men Christians) because there (by an art proper to yourself) you were to speak of true religion under a generality, which had nothing to do with the duty of Christians, in reference to toleration: yet when here, in your second book, where you condescend all along to speak of the *Christian Reli-*

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gion, and tell us, "that the magistrates have authority to make laws for promoting the Christian religion; and do by their laws design to contribute what in them lies to make men good *Christians;*" and complain of toleration as the very bane of the life and spirit of *Christianity*, &c. and have vouchsafed particularly to mention the Gospel; why here, having been called upon for it, you could not send men to the Scriptures, and tell them directly, that those they were to study diligently, those they were impartially and carefully to examine, to bring them to the true religion, and into the way of salvation; rather than talk to them, as you do, of receiving instruction, and considering reasons and arguments proper and sufficient to convince them; rather than propose, as you do all along, such objects of examination and inquiry in general terms, as are as hard to be found as the thing itself for which they are to be examined: why, I say, you have here again avoided sending men to examine the Scriptures, is just matter of inquiry. And for this you must apply yourself again to your men of art, to furnish you with some other reason.

If you will but cast your eyes back to your next page, you will there find that you build upon this, that the subject of your and the author's inquiry "is only what method is to be used to bring men to the true religion." If this be so, your men of art, who cannot allow you to descend to any such rule as the Scriptures, because you speak of the true religion in general, *i. e.* not as limited to any particular dispensation, or to the times of the Scriptures, must allow, that you deserve to be head of their college; since you are so strict an observer of their rules, that though your inquiry be, "What method is to be used to bring men to the true religion," now under the particular dispensation of the Gospel, and under Scripture-times; you think it an unpardonable fault to recede so far from your generality, as to admit the study and examination of the Scripture into your method; for fear, it is like, your method would be too particular, if it would not now serve to bring men to the true religion, who lived before the

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flood. But had you had as good a memory, as is generally thought needful to a man of art, it is believed you would have spared this reason, for your being so backward in putting men upon examination of the Scripture. And any one, but a man of art, who shall read what you tell us the magistrate's duty is; and will but consider how convenient it would be, that men should receive no instruction but from the ministry, that you there tell us the magistrate assists; examine no arguments, hear nothing of the Gospel, receive no other sense of the Scripture but what the ministry proposes; (who if they had but the coactive power, you think them as capable of as other men,) might assist themselves; he, I say, who reflects but on these things, may perhaps find a reason that may better satisfy the ignorant and unlearned, who have not had the good luck to arrive at being of the number of these men of art, why you cannot descend to propose to men the studying of the Scripture.

Let me for once suppose you in holy orders, (for we, that are not of the *adepti*, may be allowed to be ignorant of the punctilios in writing observed by the men of art) and let me then ask what art is this, whose rules are of that authority, that one, who has received commission from Heaven to preach the Gospel in season and out of season for the salvation of souls, may not allow himself to propose the reading, studying, examining of the Scripture, which has for at least these sixteen hundred years contained the only true religion in the world; for fear such a proposal should offend against the rules of this art, by being too particular, and confined to the Gospel-dispensation; and therefore could not pass muster, nor find admittance, in a treatise wherein the author professes it his only business to "inquire what method is to be used to bring men to the true religion?" Do you expect any other dispensation, that you are so afraid of being too particular, if you should recommend the use and study of the Scripture, to bring men to the true religion now in the times of the Gospel? Why might you not as well send them to the Scriptures, as to the ministers and teachers

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of the true religion? Have those ministers any other religion to teach than what is contained in the Scriptures? But perhaps you do this out of kindness and care, because possibly the Scriptures could not be found; but who were the ministers of the true religion, men could not possibly miss. Indeed, you have allowed yourself to descend to what belongs only to some particular times and dispensations, for their sake, when you speak of the ministers of the Gospel. But whether it be as fully agreed on amongst Christians, who are the ministers of the Gospel that men must hearken to, and be guided by; as which are the writings of the apostles and evangelists, that, if studied, will instruct them in the way to heaven; is more than you or your men of art can be positive in. Where are the canons of this over-ruling art to be found, to which you pay such reverence? May a man of no distinguishing character be admitted to the privilege of them? For I see it may be of notable use at a dead-lift, and bring a man off with flying colours, when truth and reason can do him but little service. The strong guard you have in the powers you write for, and when you have engaged a little too far, the safe retreat you have always at hand in an appeal to these men of art, made me almost at a stand, whether I were not best make a truce with one who had such auxiliaries. A friend of mine, finding me talk thus, replied briskly, it is a matter of religion, which requires not men of art; and the assistance of such art as savours so little of the simplicity of the Gospel, both shows and makes the cause the weaker. And so I went on to your two next paragraphs.

In them, to vindicate a pretty strange argument for the magistrate's use of force, you think it convenient to repeat it out of your A. p. 26; and so, in compliance with you, shall I do here again. There you tell us, "The power you ascribe to the magistrate is given him to bring men, not to his own, but to the true religion: and though, (as our author puts us in mind) the religion of every prince is orthodox to himself; yet if this power keep within its bounds, it can serve the

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interest of no other religion but the true, among such as have any concern for their eternal salvation; (and those that have none, deserve not to be considered) because the penalties it enables him that has it to inflict, are not such as may tempt such persons either to renounce a religion which they believe to be true, or to profess one which they do not believe to be so; but only such as are apt to put them upon a serious and impartial examination of the controversy between the magistrate and them, which is the way for them to come to the knowledge of the truth. And if, upon such examination of the matter, they chance to find that the truth does not lie on the magistrate's side, they have gained thus much however, even by the magistrate's misapplying his power; that they know better than they did before where the truth doth lie; and all the hurt that comes to them by it, is only the suffering some tolerable inconveniencies for their following the light of their own reason, and the dictates of their own consciences; which certainly is no such mischief to mankind as to make it more eligible that there should be no such power vested in the magistrate, but the care of every man's soul should be left to himself alone, (as this author demands it.)"

To this I tell you, "That here, out of abundant kindness, when dissenters have their heads, without any cause, broken, you provide them a plaster." For, say you, "if upon such examination of the matter, (*i. e.* brought to it by the magistrate's punishment) they chance to find that the truth doth not lie on the magistrate's side, they have gained thus much however, even by the magistrate's misapplying his power, that they know better than they did before where the truth does lie. Which is as true as if you should say: Upon examination I find such an one is out of the way to York, therefore I know better than I did before that I am in the right. For neither of you may be in the right. This were true indeed, if there were but two ways in all, a right and a wrong." To this you reply here: "That whoever shall consider the penalties, will,

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you persuade yourself, find no heads broken, and so but little need of a plaster. The penalties, as you say, are to be such as will not tempt such as have any concern for their eternal salvation either to renounce a religion which they believe to be true, or profess one which they believe not to be so; but only such as, being weighed in gold scales, are just enough, or, as you express it, are apt to put them upon a serious and impartial examination of the controversy between the magistrate and them." If you had been pleased to have told us what penalties those were, we might have been able to guess whether there would have been broken heads or no: but since you have not vouchsafed to do it, and, if I mistake not, will again appeal to your men of art for another dispensation, rather than ever do it; I fear nobody can be sure these penalties will not reach to something worse than a broken head: especially if the magistrate shall observe that you impute the rise and growth of false religions (which it is the magistrate's duty to hinder) to the pravity of human nature, unbridled by authority; which by what follows he may have reason to think is to use force sufficient to counterbalance the folly, perverseness, and wickedness of men: and whether then he may not lay on penalties sufficient, if not to break men's heads, yet to ruin them in their estates and liberties, will be more than you can undertake. And since you acknowledge here, that the magistrate may err so far in the use of this his power, as to mistake the persons that he lays his penalties on; will you be security that he shall not also mistake in the proportion of them, and not lay on such as men would willingly exchange for a broken head? All the assurance you give us of this is, "If this power keep within its bounds, *i.e.* as you here explain it, If the penalties the magistrate makes use of to promote a false religion, do not exceed the measure of those which he may warrantably use for the promoting the true." The magistrate may, notwithstanding any thing you have said, or can say, use any sort of penalties, any degree of punishment; you having neither showed the

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measure of them, nor will be ever able to show the utmost measure, which may not be exceeded, if any may be used.

But what is this I find here? "If the penalties the magistrate make use of to promote a *false religion.*" Is it possible that the magistrate can make use of penalties to promote a false religion; of whom you told us, but three pages back, "That may always be said of him, (what St. Paul said of himself) that he can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth?" By that one would have thought you had undertaken to us, that the magistrate could no more use force to promote a false religion, than St. Paul could preach to promote a false religion. If you say, the magistrate has no commission to promote a false religion, and therefore it may always be said of him what Saint Paul said of himself, &c. I say, no minister was ever commissioned to preach falsehood; and therefore it may always be said of every minister, (what St. Paul said of himself) that he can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth:" whereby we shall very commodiously have an infallible guide in every parish, as well as one in every commonwealth. But if you thus use Scripture, I imagine you will have reason to appeal again to your men of art, whether, though you may not be allowed to recommend to others the examination and use of Scripture, to find the true religion, yet you yourself may not use the Scripture to what purpose, and in what sense you please, for the defence of your cause.

To the remainder of what I said in that paragraph, your answer is nothing but an exception to an inference I made. The argument you were upon, was to justify the magistrate's inflicting penalties to bring men to a false religion, by the gain those that suffered them would receive.

Their gain was this: "That they would know better than they did before where the truth does lie." To which I replied, "Which is as true, as if you should say, upon examination I find such an one is out of the way to York; therefore I know better than I did

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before, that I am in the right." This consequence you find fault with, and say it should be thus: "Therefore I know better than I did before, where the right way lies." This, you tell me, "would have been true; which was not for my purpose." These consequences, one or the other, are much-what alike true. For he that of an hundred ways, amongst which there is but one right, shuts out one that he discovers certainly to be wrong, knows as much better than he did before, that he is in the right, as he knows better than before, where the right way lies. For before it was ninety-nine to one that he was not in the right; and now he knows it is but ninety-eight to one that he is not in the right; and therefore knows so much better than before, that he is in the right, just as much as he knows better than he did before, where the right way lies. For let him, upon your supposition, proceed on; and every day, upon examination of a controversy with some one in one of the remaining ways, discover him to be in the wrong; he will every day know better than he did before, equally, where the right way lies, and that he is in it; till at last he will come to discover the right way itself, and himself in it. And therefore your inference, whatever you think, is as much as the other for my purpose; which was to show what a notable gain a man made, in the variety of false opinions and religions in the world, by discovering that the magistrate had not the truth on his side; and what thanks he owed the magistrate, for inflicting penalties upon him so much for his improvement, and for affording him so much knowledge at so cheap a rate. And should not a man have reason to boast of his purchase, if he should by penalties be driven to hear and examine all the arguments that can be proposed by those in power for all their foolish and false religions? And yet this gain is what you propose as a justification of magistrates' inflicting penalties for promoting their false religions. And an "impartial examination of the controversy between them and the magistrate, you tell us here, is the way for such as have any concern for their eternal salvation to come to the knowledge of the truth."

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To my saying, "He that is punished may have examined before, and then I am sure he gains nothing:" you reply, "But neither does he lose much, if it be true, which you there add, that all the hurt that befalls him is only the suffering some tolerable inconvenience for his following the light of his own reason, and the dictates of his conscience." So it is, therefore, you would have a man rewarded for being an honest man (for so is he who follows the light of his own reason, and the dictates of his conscience), only with the suffering some tolerable inconveniencies. And yet those tolerable inconveniencies are such as are to counterbalance men's lusts, and the corruption of depraved nature, which you know any slight penalty is sufficient to master. But that the magistrate's discipline shall stop at those your tolerable inconveniencies, is what you are loth to be guarantee for: for all the security you dare give of it is, "If it be true which you there add." But if it should be otherwise, the hurt may be more I see than you are willing to answer.

L. II. p. 133. "However, you think you do well to encourage the magistrate in punishing, and comfort the man who has suffered unjustly by showing what he shall gain by it. Whereas, on the contrary, in a discourse of this nature, where the bounds of right and wrong are inquired into, and should be established, the magistrate was to be showed the bounds of his authority, and

L. III. p. 71. As to what you say here of the nature of my discourse, I shall only put you in mind that the question there debated is, Whether the magistrate has any right or authority to use force for the promoting the true religion; which plainly supposes the unlawfulness and injustice of using force to promote a false religion, as granted on both sides. So that I could no way be obliged to take notice of it in my discourse, but only as occasion should be offered.

And whether I have not showed the bounds of the magistrate's authority, as far as I

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warned of the injury he did when he misapplied his power, and punished any man who deserved it not; and not be soothed into injustice, by consideration of gain that might thence accrue to the sufferer. 'Shall we do evil, that good may come of it?' There are a sort of people who are very wary of touching upon the magistrate's duty, and tender of showing the bounds of his power, and the injustice and ill consequences of his misapplying it; at least, so long as it is misapplied in favour of them, and their party. I know not whether you are of their number: but this I am sure, you have the misfortune here to fall into their mistake. The magistrate, you confess, may in this case misapply his power; and instead of representing to him the injustice of it, and the account he must give to his Sovereign one day of this great trust put into his was any way obliged to do it, let any indifferent person judge. But to talk here of a "sort of people who are very wary of touching upon the magistrate's duty, and tender of showing the bounds of his power," where I tell the magistrate that the power I ascribe to him, in reference to religion, is given him to bring men, "not to his own, but to the true religion;" and that he misapplies it, when he endeavours to promote a false religion by it, is, methinks, at least a little unseasonable.

Nor am I any more concerned in what you say of the magistrate's misapplying his power in favour of a party. For as you have not yet proved that his applying his power to the promoting the true religion (which is all that I contend for) is misapplying it; so much less can you prove it to be misapplying it in favour of a party.

But that "I encourage the magistrate in punishing men to bring them to a false religion, (for that is the punishing we here speak of) and soothe him into injustice, by showing what those who suffer unjustly shall gain by it," when in the very same breath I tell him that by so punishing he misapplies his power, is a discovery which I believe none but yourself could have made. When

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hands, for the equal protection of all his subjects; you pretend advantages which the sufferer may receive from it; and so, instead of disheartening from you, give encouragement, to the mischief: which, upon your principle, joined to the natural thirst in man after arbitrary power, may be carried to all manner of exorbitancy, with some pretence of right."

I say that the magistrate misapplies his power by so punishing, I suppose all other men understand me to say, that he sins in doing it, and lays himself open to divine vengeance by it. And can he be encouraged to this, by hearing what others may gain by what (without repentance) must cost him so dear?

Here your men of art will do well to be at hand again. For it may be seasonable for you to appeal to them, whether the nature of your discourse will allow you to descend to show "the magistrate the bounds of his authority, and warn him of the injury he does, if he misapplies his power."

You say, "the question there debated is, whether the magistrate has any right or authority to use force for promoting the true religion; which plainly supposes the unlawfulness and injustice of using force to promote a false religion, as granted on both sides." Neither is that the question in debate; nor, if it were, does it suppose what you pretend. But the question in debate is, as you put it, Whether any body has a right to use force in matters of religion? You say, indeed, "The magistrate has, to bring men to the true religion." If, thereupon, you think the magistrate has none to bring men to a false religion, whatever your men of art may think, it is probable other men would not have thought it to have been beside the nature of your discourse, to have warned the magistrate, that he should consider well, and impartially examine

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the grounds of his religion, before he use any force to bring men to it. This is of such moment to men's temporal and eternal interests, that it might well deserve some particular caution addressed to the magistrate, who might as much need to be put in mind of impartial examination as other people: and it might, whatever your men of art may allow, be justly expected from you, who think it no deviation from the rules of art to tell the subjects that they must submit to the penalties laid on them, or else fall under the sword of the magistrate; which, how true soever, will hardly by any body be found to be much more to your purpose in this discourse, than it would have been to have told the magistrate of what ill consequence it would be to him and his people, if he misused his power, and warned him to be cautious in the use of it. But not a word that way. Nay, even where you mention the account he shall give for so doing, it is still to satisfy the subjects that they are well provided for, and not left unfurnished of the means of salvation, by the right God has put into the magistrate's hand to use his power to bring them to the true religion; and therefore they ought to be well content; because, if the magistrate misapply it, the Great Judge will punish him for it. Look, sir, and see whether what you say, any where, of the magistrate's misuse of his power, have any other tendency: and then I appeal to the sober reader, whether, if you had been as much concerned for the bounding, as for the exercise of force in the magistrate's hands, you would not have spoke of it after another manner.

The next thing you say is, "that the question (being whether the magistrate has any right to use force to bring men to the true religion,) supposes the unlawfulness of using force to promote a false religion as granted on both sides;" which is so far from true, that I suppose quite the contrary, viz. That if the magistrate has a right to use force to promote the true, he must have a right to use force to promote his own religion; and that for reasons I have given you elsewhere. But the supposition of a supposition serves to excuse

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you from speaking any thing directly of setting bounds to the magistrate's power, or telling him his duty in that point; though you are very frequent in mentioning the obligation he is under, that men should not want the assistance of his force, and how answerable he is if any body miscarry for want of it; though there be not the least whisper of any care to be taken, that nobody be misled by it. And now I recollect myself, I think your method would not allow it: for if you should have put the magistrate upon examining, it would have supposed him as liable to error as other men; whereas, to secure the magistrate's acting right, upon your foundation of never using force but for the true religion, I see no help for it, but either he or you (who are to license him) must be got past the state of examination into that of certain knowledge and infallibility.

Indeed, as you say, "you tell the magistrate that the power you ascribe to him in reference to religion, is given him to bring men not to his own, but to the true religion." But do you put him upon a severe and impartial examination which, amongst the many false, is the only true religion he must use force to bring his subjects to; that he may not mistake and misapply his power in a business of that consequence? Not a syllable of this. Do you then tell him which it is he must take, without examination, and promote with force; whether that of England, France, or Denmark? This, methinks, is as much as the pope, with all his infallibility, could require of princes. And yet what is it less than this you do, when you suppose the religion of the church of England to be the only true; and, upon this your supposition, tell the magistrate it is his duty, by force, to bring men to it, without ever putting him upon examining, or suffering him or any body else to question, whether it be the only true religion or no? For if you will stick to what you in another place say: "That it is enough to suppose that there is one true religion, and but one, and that that religion may be known by those who profess it;" what authority will this knowableness of the true reli-

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gion give to the king of England, more than to the king of France, to use force, if he does not actually know the religion he professes to be the true; or to the magistrate more than the subject, if he has not examined the grounds of his religion? But if he believes you when you tell him your religion is the true, all is well; he has authority enough to use force, and he need not examine any farther. If this were not the case, why you should not be careful to prepare a little advice to make the magistrate examine, as well as you are solicitous to provide force to make the subject examine, will require the skill of a man of art to discover.

Whether you are not of the number of those men I there mentioned (for that there have been such men in the world instances might be given), one may doubt from your principles. For if, upon a supposition that yours is the true religion, you can give authority to the magistrate to inflict penalties on all his subjects that dissent from the communion of the national church, without examining whether theirs, too, may not be that only true religion which is necessary to salvation; is not this to demand, that the magistrate's power should be applied only in favour of a party? And can any one avoid being confirmed in this suspicion, when he reads that broad insinuation of yours, p. 34, as if our magistrates were not concerned for truth or piety, because they granted a relaxation of those penalties which you would have employed in favour of your party? for so it must be called, and not the church of God, exclusive of others, unless you will say men cannot be saved out of the communion of your particular church, let it be national where you please.

You do not, you say, encourage the magistrate to misapply his power; because "in the very same breath you tell him he misapplies his power." I answer, let all men understand you, as much as you please, to say that he sins in doing it; that will not excuse you from encouraging him there, unless it be impossible that a man may be encouraged to sin. If your telling the magistrate that his subjects gain by his misapplying of force, be not an encouragement to him to misapply it,

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the doing good to others must cease to be an encouragement to any action. And whether it be not a great encouragement in this case to the magistrate to go on in the use of force, without impartially examining whether his or his subjects' be the true religion,—when he is told that, be his religion true or false, his subjects, who suffer, will be sure to be gainers by it,—let any one judge. For the encouragement is not, as you put it, to the magistrate to use force to bring men to what he thinks a false religion; but it is an encouragement to the magistrate, who presumes his to be the true religion, to punish his dissenting subjects, without due and impartial examination on which side the truth lies. For having never told the magistrate, that neglect of examination is a sin in him, if you should tell him a thousand times, that he who uses his power to bring men to a false religion misapplies it, he would not understand by it that he sinned, whilst he thought his the true; and so it would be no restraint to the misapplying his power.

And thus we have some prospect of this admirable machine you have set up for the salvation of souls.

The magistrate is to use force to bring men to the true religion. But what if he misapplies it to bring men to a false religion? It is well still for his subjects: they are gainers by it. But this may encourage him to a misapplication of it. No; you tell him that he that uses it to bring men to a false religion, misapplies it; and, therefore, he cannot but understand that you say "he sins, and lays himself open to divine vengeance." No; he believes himself in the right; and thinks as St. Paul, whilst a persecutor, that he does God good service. And you assure him here, he makes his suffering subjects gainers; and so he goes on as comfortably as St. Paul did. Is there no remedy for this? Yes, a very ready one, and that is, that the "one only true religion may be known by those who profess it to be the only true religion."

To which, if we add how you moderate as well as direct the magistrate's hand in punishing, by making the last regulation of your convenient penalties to lie

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in the prudence and experience of magistrates themselves, we shall find the advantages of your method. For are not your necessary means of salvation, which lie in moderate penalties used to bring men to the true religion, brought to a happy state; when that which is to guide the magistrate in the knowledge of the true religion is, that "the true religion may be known by those who profess it to be the only true religion;" and the convenient penalties, to be used for the promoting of it, are such as the magistrate shall in his prudence think fit; and that, whether the magistrate applies it right or wrong, the subject will be a gainer by it? If in either of your discourses you have given the magistrate any better direction than this to know the true religion by, which he is by force to promote; or any other intelligible measure to moderate his penalties by; or any other caution to restrain the misuse of his power; I desire you to show it me: and then I shall think I have reason to believe, that in this debate you have had more care of the true religion, and the salvation of souls, than to encourage the magistrate to use the power he has, by your direction, and without examination, and to what degree he shall think fit, in favour of a party. For the matter thus stated, if I mistake not, will serve any magistrate to use any degree of force against any that dissent from his national religion.

Having recommended to the subjects the magistrate's persecution by a show of gain, which will accrue to them by it, you do well to bring in the example of Julian, who, whatever he did to the Christians, would, no more than you, own that it was persecution, but for their advantage in the other world. But whether his pretending gain to them, upon grounds which he did not believe; or your pretending gain to them, which nobody can believe to be one; be a greater mockery, you were best look. This seems reasonable, that his talk of philanthropy, and yours of moderation, should be bound up together. For till you speak and tell them plainly what they may trust to, the advantage the persecuted are to receive from your clemency may, I

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imagine, make a second part to what the Christians of that age received from his. But you are solicitous for the salvation of souls, and dissenters shall find the benefit of it.

CHAPTER IX.

Of the Usefulness of Force in Matters of Religion.

You having granted that in all pleas for any thing, because of its usefulness, it is not enough to say that it may be serviceable; but it must be considered, not only what it may, but what it is likely to produce; and the greater good or harm likely to come from it ought to determine the use of it; I think there need nothing more to be said to show the uselessness of force in the magistrate's hands for promoting the true religion, after it has been proved that, if any, then all magistrates, who believe their religion to be true, are under an obligation to use it. But since the usefulness and necessity of force is the main foundation on which you build your hypothesis, we will in the two remaining chapters examine particularly what you say for them.

To the author's saying, "That truth seldom hath received, and he fears never will receive, much assistance from the power of great men, to whom she is but rarely known, and more rarely welcome;" you answer, "And yet God himself foretold and promised that kings should be nursing fathers, and queens nursing mothers to his church." If we may judge of this prophecy by what is past or present, we shall have reason to think it concerns not our days; or if it does, that God intended not that the church should have many such nursing fathers and nursing mothers, that were to nurse them up with moderate penalties, if those were

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to be the swaddling-clouts of this nursery. Perhaps, if you read that chapter, you will think you have little reason to build much on this promise, till the restoring of Israel: and when you see the Gentiles bring thy, (*i. e.* as the style of the chapter seems to import the sons of the Israelites) "sons in their arms, and thy daughters be carried upon their shoulders," as is promised in the immediately preceding words; you may conclude that then "kings shall be thy (*i. e.* Israel's) nursing fathers, and queens thy nursing mothers." This seems to me to be the time designed by that prophecy; and I guess to a great many others, upon an attentive reading that chapter in Isaiah. And to all such this text will do you little service, till you make out the meaning of it better than by barely quoting of it; which will scarce ever prove, that God hath promised that so many princes shall be friends to the true religion, that it will be better for the true religion, that princes should use force for the imposing or propagating of their religions, than not. For unless it prove that, it answers not the author's argument; as an indifferent reader must needs see. For he says not "truth never, but she seldom hath received, and he fears never will receive (not any, but) much assistance from the power of great men, to whom she is *but rarely known, and more rarely welcome.*" And therefore to this of Isaiah pray join that of St. Paul, 1 Cor. i. 26, "Not many wise, not many mighty, not many noble."

But supposing many kings were to be nursing fathers to the church, and that this prophecy were to be fulfilled in this age, and the church were now to be their nursery; it is I think more proper to understand this figurative promise, that their pains and discipline were to be employed on those in the church, and that they should feed and cherish them, rather than that these words meant that they should whip those that were out of it. And therefore this text will, I suppose, upon a just consideration of it, signify very little against the known matter of fact which the author urges; unless you can find a country where the cudgel and the scourge

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are more the badges and instruments of a good nurse than the breast and the bib; and that she is counted a good nurse of her own child, who busies herself in whipping children not hers, nor belonging to her nursery.

"The fruits which give you no enco ragement to hope for any advantage from the author's toleration, which almost all but the church of England enjoyed in the times of the blessed reformation, as it was called, you tell us, were sects and heresies." Here your zeal hangs a little in your light. It is not the author's toleration which here you accuse. That, you know, is universal: and the universality of it is that which a little before you wondered at, and complained of. Had it been the author's toleration, it could not have been almost all but the church of England; but it had been the church of England and all others. But let us take it, that sects and heresies were, or will be the fruits of a free toleration; *i. e.* men are divided in their opinions and ways of worship. Differences in ways of worship, wherein there is nothing mixed inconsistent with the true religion, will not hinder men from salvation, who sincerely follow the best light they have; which they are as likely to do under toleration as force. And as for difference of opinions, speculative opinions in religion; I think I may safely say, that there are scarce any where three considering men, (for it is want of consideration you would punish) who are in their opinions throughout of the same mind. Thus far then, if charity be preserved, (which it is likelier to be where there is toleration than where there is persecution) though without uniformity, I see no great reason to complain of those ill fruits of toleration.

But men will run, as they did in the late times, into "dangerous and destructive errors, and extravagant ways of worship." As to errors in opinion, if men upon toleration be so apt to vary in opinions, and run so wide one from another, it is evident they are not so averse to thinking as you complain. For it is hard for men, not under force, to quit one opinion and embrace another, without thinking of them. But if there be danger of that, it is most likely the national

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religion should sweep and draw to itself the loose and unthinking part of men, who without thought, as well as without any contest with their corrupt nature, may embrace the profession of the countenanced religion, and join in outward communion with the great and ruling men of the nation. For he that troubles not his head at all about religion, what other can so well suit him as the national, with which the cry and preferments go; and where, it being, as you say, presumable that he makes that his profession upon conviction, and that he is in earnest; he is sure to be orthodox without the pains of examining, and has the law and government on his side to make it good that he is in the right?

But seducers, if they be tolerated, will be ready at hand, and diligent; and men will hearken to them. Seducers have surely no force on their side, to make people hearken. And if this be so, there is a remedy at hand, better than force, if you and your friends will use it, which cannot but prevail; and that is, let the ministers of truth be as diligent; and they bringing truth with them, truth obvious and easy to be understood, as you say what is necessary to salvation is, cannot but prevail.

But seducers are hearkened to, because they teach opinions favourable to men's lusts. Let the magistrate, as is his duty, hinder the practices which their lusts would carry them to, and the advantage will be still on the side of truth.

After all, sir, if, as the apostle tells the Corinthians, 1 Cor. xi. 19, "There must be heresies amongst you, that they which are approved may be made manifest;" which, I beseech you, is best for the salvation of men's souls; that they should inquire, hear, examine, consider, and then have the liberty to profess what they are persuaded of; or that, having considered, they should be forced not to own nor follow their persuasions; or else that, being of the national religion, they should go ignorantly on without any consideration at all? In one case, if your penalties prevail, men are forced to act contrary to their consciences, which is not the way to

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salvation; and if the penalties prevail not, you have the same fruits, sects, and heresies, as under toleration: in the other, it is true, those ignorant, loose, unthinking conformists do not break company with those who embrace the truth that will save them; but I fear can no more be said to have any share in it, than those who openly dissent from it. For it is not being in the company, but having on the wedding-garment, that keeps men from being bound hand and foot, and cast into the dreadful and eternal prison.

You tell us, "Force has a proper efficacy to procure the enlightening of the understanding, and the production of belief," viz. by making men consider. But your ascribing men's aversion to examine matters of religion to the corruption of their nature; force, your way applied, (*i. e.* so that men avoid the penalties by an outward conformity) cannot have any proper efficacy to procure consideration; since men may outwardly conform, and retain their corruption and aversion to consideration; and upon this account force, your way applied, is absolutely impertinent.

But further; if force has such a proper efficacy to procure the production of belief, it will do more harm than good, employed by any but orthodox magistrates. But how to put it only into orthodox hands is the difficulty. For I think I have proved, that if orthodox magistrates may, and ought to use force, for the promoting their religion, all that think themselves orthodox are obliged to use it too. And this may serve for an answer to all that you have said, p. 16.

I having said, "Whatever indirect efficacy there be in force applied by the magistrate your way, it makes against you; force used by the magistrate to bring men to consider those reasons and arguments which are proper and sufficient to convince them, but which, without being forced, they would not consider; may, say you, be serviceable indirectly and at a distance to make men embrace the truth which must save them. And thus, say I, it may be serviceable to bring men to receive and embrace falsehood, which will destroy them." To this you,

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with great triumph, reply,—"How, sir, may force be used by the magistrate, to bring men to consider those reasons and arguments which are proper and sufficient to convince them, be serviceable to bring men to embrace falsehood, such falsehood as will destroy them? It seems then there are reasons and arguments which are proper and sufficient to convince men of the truth of falsehood, which will destroy. Which is certainly a very extraordinary discovery, though such as no man can have any reason to thank you for."

In the first place, let me ask you, Where did you find, or from what words of mine do you infer that notable proposition, "That there are reasons and arguments proper and sufficient to convince men of the truth of falsehood?" If a magistrate of the true religion may use force to make men consider reasons and arguments proper to convince men of the truth of his religion, may not a prince of a false religion use force to make men consider reasons and arguments proper and sufficient to convince them of what he believes to be true? And may not force thus be serviceable to bring men to receive and embrace falsehood?

In the next place, did you, who argue with so much school-subtilty, as if you drank it in at the very fountain, never hear of such an ill way of arguing as "a conjunctis ad divisa?" There are no arguments proper and sufficient to bring a man into the belief of what is in itself false, whilst he knows or believes it to be false; therefore there are no arguments proper and sufficient to bring a man into the belief of what is in itself false, which he neither knows nor believes to be so. A senior sophister would be laughed at for such logic. And yet this is all you say in that sentence you erect for a trophy, "to convince men of the truth of falsehood;" which though not my words, but such as you in your way supply from what I said, you are exceedingly pleased with, and think their very repeating a triumph. But though there are no arguments proper and sufficient to convince men of the truth of falsehood, as falsehood; yet I hope you will allow that there are arguments proper and sufficient to

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make men receive falsehoods for truths; why else do you complain of seducers? And those who embrace falsehoods for truths, do it under the appearance of truth, misled by those arguments which make it appear so, and so convince them. And that magistrates, who take their religion to be true, though it be not so, may with force use such arguments, you will, I think, grant.

But you talk as if nobody could have arguments proper and sufficient to convince another, but he that was of your way, or your church. This indeed is a new and very extraordinary discovery, and such as your brethren, if you can convince them of it, will have reason to thank you for. For if any one was ever by arguments and reasons brought off, or seduced from your church, to be a dissenter; there were then, I think, reasons and arguments proper and sufficient to convince him. I will not name to you again Mr. Reynolds, because you have charity enough to question his sincerity. Though his leaving his country, friends, and acquaintance, may be presumed as great a mark of his being convinced and in earnest, as it is for one to write for a national religion in a country where it is uppermost. I will not yet deny, but that, in you, it may be pure zeal for the true religion, which you would have assisted with the magistrate's force. And since you seem so much concerned for your sincerity in the argument, it must be granted you deserve the character of a well-meaning man, who own your sincerity in a way so little advantageous to your judgment.

But if Mr. Reynolds, in your opinion, was misled by corrupt ends, or secular interest; what do you think of a prince [James II.] now living? Will you doubt his sincerity? or that he was convinced of the truth of the religion he professed, who ventured three crowns for it? What do you think of Mr. Chillingworth, when he left the church of England for the Romish profession? Did he do it without being convinced that that was right? Or was he convinced with reasons and arguments, not proper or sufficient to convince him?

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But certainly this could not be true, because, as you say, p. 25, the Scripture does not teach any thing of it. Or perhaps those that leave your communion do it always without being convinced, and only think they are convinced when they are not; or are convinced with arguments not proper and sufficient to convince them. If nobody can convince another, but he that has truth on his side, you do more honour to the "first and second letter concerning toleration," than is for the advantage of your cause, when you impute to them the increase of sects and heresies amongst us. And there are some, even of the church of England, have professed themselves so fully satisfied by the reasons and arguments in the first of them, that though I dare not be positive to you, whose privilege it is to convince men that they are convinced; yet I may say, it is as presumable they are convinced, having owned it, as it is presumable that all that are conformists are made so upon reason and conviction.

This, I suppose, may serve for an answer to your next words, "That God in his just judgment will send such as receive not the love of truth, that they may be saved, but reject it for the pleasure they have in unrighteousness, ἐνέργειαν πλάνης, strong delusion, *i. e.* such reasons and arguments as will prevail with men, so disposed, to believe a lie, that they may be damned this you confess the Scripture plainly teaches us. But that there are any such reasons or arguments as are proper and sufficient to convince or satisfy any, but such resolute and obdurate sinners, of the truth of such falsehood as will destroy them, is a position which you are sure the Scripture doth not teach us; and which, you tell me, when I have better considered it, you hope I will not undertake to maintain. And yet if it be not maintainable, what I say here is to no purpose: for if there be no such reasons and arguments as here we speak of, it is in vain to talk of the magistrate's using force to make men consider them."

But if you are still of the mind, that no magistrate but those who are of the true religion can have argu-

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ments backed with force, proper and sufficient to convince; and that in England none but resolute, obdurate sinners ever forsook or forbore the communion of the church of England, upon reasons and arguments that satisfy or convince them; I shall leave you to enjoy so charitable an opinion.

But as to the usefulness of force, your way applied, I shall lay you down again the same argument I used before; though in words less fitted for your way of reasoning on them, now I know your talent. If there be any efficacy in force to bring men to any persuasion, it will, your way applied, bring more men to error than to truth. Your way of using it is only to punish men for not being of the national religion; which is the only way you do or can apply force, without a toleration. Non-conformity is the fault that is punished; which fault, when it ceases, the punishment ceases. But yet to make them consider, is the end for which they are punished; but whether it be or be not intended to make men consider it alters nothing in the case. Now I say, that since all magistrates who believe their religion to be true, are as much obliged to use force to bring their subjects to it, as if it were true; and since most of the national religions of the world are erroneous; if force made use of to bring men to the national religion, by punishing dissenters, have any efficacy, let it be what it will; indirect and at a distance, if you please; it is like to do twenty times more harm than good; because of the national religions of the world, to speak much within compass, there are above twenty wrong for one that is right.

Indeed, could force be directed to drive all men indifferently, who are negligent and backward in it, to study, examine, and consider seriously matters of religion, and search out the truth; and if men were, upon their study and examination, permitted to follow what appears to them to be right; you might have some pretence for force, as serviceable to truth in making men consider. But this is impossible, but under a toleration. And I doubt whether, even there, force can be so applied, as to make men consider and impartially

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examine what is true in the professed religions of the world, and to embrace it. This at least is certain, that where punishments pursue men, like outlying deer, only to the pale of the national church; and, when once they are within that, leave them free there and at ease; it can do no service to the true religion, even in a country where the national is the true. For the penalties ceasing as soon as men are got within the pale and communion of the church, they help not men at all against that which you assign as the great hinderance to the true religion, and which therefore, in your opinion, makes force necessary to assist it.

For there being no necessity that men should leave either their vices or corruption, or so much as their ignorance, to get within the pale of the church; force, your way applied, serves only to bring them, even in the few Christian and orthodox countries, to the profession, not to the knowledge, belief, or practice, of the true religion.

You say corrupt nature inclines men from the true religion to false ones; and moderate force is requisite to make such men consider. But such men as, out of corrupt nature, and for their ease and carnal pleasures, choose an erroneous religion without considering, will again, as soon as they can find their choice incommoded by those penalties, consult the same corrupt nature and carnal appetites, and, without considering any thing further, conform to that religion where they can best enjoy themselves. It is only the conscientious part of dissenters, such as dissent not out of indulgence to corrupt nature, but out of persuasion, who will not conform without considering as they ought. And therefore your argument from corrupt nature is out of doors. If moderate penalties serve only to work on those who are led by corrupt nature, they are of no use but to fill the church with hypocrites; that is, to make those men worse hypocrites than they were before, by a new act of hypocrisy; and to corrupt the manners of the rest of the church, by their converse with these. And whether this be for the salvation of souls, as is pretended, or for some other end, that the priests of all

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religions have generally so earnestly contended for it, I leave to be considered. For as for those who dissent out of persuasion, I suspect your moderate penalties will have little effect upon them. For such men being awed by the fear of hell-fire, if that fear will not make them consider better than they have done, moderate penalties will be too weak to work upon them. It is well if dragooning and martyring can do it.

But you add, "May it not be true nevertheless, that force, your way applied, may be serviceable, indirectly and at a distance, to bring men to embrace the truth, which may save them? which is all you are concerned here to make good." So that if it may possibly happen that it should ever bring two men to embrace the truth, you have gained your point, and overthrown toleration, by the usefulness and necessity there is of force. For without being forced these two men would never have considered: which is more yet than you know, unless you are of his private council, who only can tell when the season of grace is past, and the time come that preaching, entreaty, instruction, and persuasion shall never after prevail upon a man. But whatever you are here concerned to make good, are you not also concerned to remember what you say; where declaring against the magistrate's having a power to use what may any way, at any time, upon any person, by any accident, be useful towards the promoting the true religion, you say, "Who sees not that however such means might chance to hit right in some few cases, yet, upon the whole matter, they would certainly do a great deal more harm than good; and in all pleas (making use of my words) for any thing because of its usefulness, it is not enough to say that it may be serviceable, but it must be considered, not only what it may, but what it is likely to produce; and the greater good or harm like to come from it ought to determine the use of it?"

You proceed; and tell me, that I, "not content to say that force, your way applied, (*i. e.* to bring men to embrace the truth which must save them) may be serviceable to bring men to embrace falsehood which

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will destroy them; and so is proper to do as much harm as good, (which seems strange enough;) I add (to increase the wonder) that in your indirect way it is much more proper and likely to make men receive and embrace error, than the truth: and that, 1. Because men out of the right way are apt, and I think I may say apter, to use force than others; which is doubtless an irrefragable demonstration, that force used by the magistrate to bring men to receive and embrace the truth which must save them, is much more proper and likely to make men receive error than the truth." And then you ask me, "How we come to talk here of what men out of the right way are apt to do, to bring others into their, *i. e.* a wrong way; where we are only inquiring, what may be done to bring men to the right way? For you must put me in mind, you say, that this is our question, viz. Whether the magistrate has any right to use force, to bring men to the true religion?" Whether the magistrate has a right to use force in matters of religion, as you more truly state it, p. 78, is the main question between us, I confess. But the question here between us is about the usefulness of force, your way applied; which being to punish dissenters as dissenters, to make them consider, I showed would do more harm than good. And to this you were here answering. Whereby, I suppose, it is plain that the question here is about the usefulness of force, so applied. And I doubt not but my readers, who are not concerned, when the question in debate will not serve your turn, to have another substituted, will take this for a regular and natural way of arguing, viz. "That force, your way applied, is more proper and likely to make men embrace error than the truth; because men out of the right way are as apt, I think I may say apter, to use force than others." You need not then ask, as you do, "How we come to talk here of men out of the right way?" You see how. If you do not, I know not what help there is for your eyes. And I must content myself that any other reader, that has eyes, will not miss it. And I wonder that you should: since you

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know I have on several occasions argued against the use of force in matters of religion, upon a supposition, that if any one, then all magistrates, have a just pretence and right to use it; which has served you in some places for matter of great reproof, and, in others, of sport and diversion. But because so plain a thing as that was so strange to you, that you thought it a ridiculous paradox to say, "That for all magistrates to suppose the religion they believed to be true, was equally just and reasonable;" and because you took no notice of the words adjoined that proved it, viz. "Unless we can imagine every where but in England, [or where the national religion is the true] men believe what at the same time they think to be a lie;" I have taken the pains to prove it to you more at large in another place, and therefore shall make bold to use it here as an argument against force, viz. That if it have any efficacy, it will do more harm than good: "Because men out of the right way are as apt, or apter, to use it;" and I shall think it a good one till you have answered it.

It is a good and a sure way, and shows a zeal to the cause, still to hold fast the conclusion, and, whatever be in debate, return still to one's old position. I arguing against what you say for the use of force, viz. "That force used not to convince by its own proper efficacy, but only to make men consider, might indirectly, and at a distance, do some service towards the bringing men to embrace the truth;" after other arguments against it, I say, that "whatever efficacy there is in force, your way applied, *i. e.* to punish all, and none but, dissenters from the national church, makes against you:" and the first reason I give for it, is in these words: "Because men out of the right way, are as apt, or apter, to use force than others:" which is what you are here answering. And what can be done better to answer it, than to the words I have above cited, to subjoin these following? "Now whereas our author says, that penalties or force is absolutely impertinent in this case, because it is not proper to convince the mind; to which you answer, that, though force be not proper to convince the

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mind, yet it is not absolutely impertinent in this case, because it may, however, do some service towards the bringing men to embrace the truth which must save them, by bringing them to consider those reasons and arguments which are proper to convince the mind; and which, without being forced, they would not consider." Here I tell you, "No; but it is much more proper and likely to make men receive and embrace error than truth; because men out of the right way are as apt, and perhaps apter, to use force than others." Which, you tell me, "is as good a proof, you believe, as the thing would admit: for otherwise, you suppose, I would have given you a better." And thus you have certainly gained the cause. For I having proved that force, your way applied, whatever efficacy it had, would do more harm than good, have not sufficiently proved that it cannot do some service towards the bringing men to embrace the truth; and therefore it is not absolutely impertinent. But since you think this apt enough to prove the use of force in matters of religion impertinent, I shall farther show you that force, applied your way to make people consider, and so to make them embrace the truth, is impertinent.

Your way is to lay penalties on men for non-conformity, as you say, to make men consider: now here let me ask any one but you, whether it be not utterly impertinent so to lay penalties on men, to make them consider, when they can avoid those penalties without considering? But because it is not enough to prove force, your way applied, utterly impertinent, I shall show you, in the next place, that were a law made to punish not barely non-conformity, but non-consideration, those penalties, laid on not considering, would be utterly impertinent; because it could never be proved that a man had not considered the arguments offered him. And therefore all law-makers till you, in all their penal laws about religion, laid all their penalties upon not embracing; and it was against that that our author was arguing, when he said penalties, in this case, are absolutely impertinent; because they are not proper to convince

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the mind. For in that case, when penalties are laid on men for not embracing, it is plain they are used as a means to make men embrace: which, since those who are careless in matters of religion can do without considering, and those who are conscientious cannot do without conviction; and since penalties can in no wise convince; this use of them is absolutely impertinent, and will always be so till you can show a way how they can be used in religion, not as motives to embrace, but as motives barely to make men consider. For if you punish them on when they tell you they have considered your arguments, but are not convinced by them; and you judge of their having not considered, by nothing but their not embracing; it is plain you use penalties instead of arguments to convince them; since without conviction, those whom our author pleads for cannot embrace; and those who do embrace without conviction, it is all one as if they did not embrace at all; they being not one jot the more in the way of salvation; and so penalties are absolutely impertinent. But embracing in the sense of the law, and yours too, when you say men have not considered as they ought as long as they reject, is nothing but outward conformity, or an outward profession of embracing, wherewith the law is satisfied, and upon which the penalties cease. Now penalties used to make men in this sense embrace, are absolutely impertinent to bring men to embrace in earnest, or, as the author calls it, believe: because an outward profession, which in this case is the immediate end to which penalties are directed, and beyond which they do not reach, is no proper means to produce in men consideration, conviction, or believing.

What can be more impertinent than to vex and disease people with the use of force, to no purpose? and that force must needs be to no purpose, which is so applied as to leave the end for which it is pretended to be used, without the means which is acknowledged necessary for its attainment. That this is so, in your way of using force, will easily appear from your hypothesis. You tell us at large, in your Argument considered, that men's lusts hinder them from even impartial consi-

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deration and examination of matters in religion: and therefore force is necessary to remove this hinderance. You tell us likewise at large in your letter, that men's corrupt nature and beloved lusts hinder them also from embracing the true religion, and that force is necessary likewise to remove this obstacle. Now, in your way of using force, wherein penalties are laid on men till, and no longer than till, they are made outwardly to conform, force is so applied, that notwithstanding the intention of the law-maker, let it be what it will, neither the obstacle to impartial examination, arising from men's lusts, nor the aversion to the embracing the true religion, arising from men's corrupt nature, can be removed; unless they can be removed without that which you suppose necessary to their removal. For since a man may conform, without being under the necessity of impartial examining or embracing, on the one hand, or suffering the penalties, on the other; it is unavoidable, that he should neither impartially examine nor embrace, if penalties are necessary to make him do either; because penalties, which are the necessary remedies to remove those hinderances, were never applied to them; and so those obstacles, not being removed for want of their necessary remedy, must continue on to hinder both examining and embracing. For penalties cannot be used as a means to any end, or be applied to the procuring any action to be done, which a man, from his lusts, or any other cause, has an aversion to; but by putting them as it were in one scale as a counterbalance to that aversion, and the action in the other scale, and putting a man under the necessity of choosing the one or the other: where that is not done, the penalty may be avoided, the aversion or obstacle hath nothing to remove it, and so the action must remain undone. So that if penalties be necessary to make men impartially examine and really embrace; if penalties are not so laid on men as to make the alternative to be either suffering the penalties or conforming; it is impossible that men who, without penalties, would not impartially examine, or really embrace, the true religion, should ever

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do either; and then I beseech you consider whether penalties, your way applied, be impertinent or no.

The necessity of penalties is only where there is some inclination or bias in a man, whencesoever arising, that keeps him from doing something in his power, which he cannot be brought to without the inconveniencies of some penal infliction. The efficacy of penalties lies in this, that the inconvenience to be suffered by the penalties overbalance the bias or inclination which leans the man the other way, and so removes the obstacle; and the application of this remedy lies only in putting a man under the necessary choice either of doing the action, or suffering the penalty: so that in whatever case a man has not been put under that necessity, there penalties have never been applied to the procuring that action: for the obstacle, or aversion to it, has never had its necessary remedy.

Perhaps you will say, it is not absolutely impertinent, because it may possibly "do some service indirectly and at a distance," and be the occasion that some may consider and embrace. If whatever may by accident contribute to any end, may be used not impertinently as a means to that end, nothing that I know can be impertinent; and a penalty of twelvepence a time laid on them for being drunk, may be said to be a pertinent means to make men Cartesians or conformists; because it may indirectly and at a distance do some service, by being an occasion to make some men consider their mispending their time; whereby it may happen that one may betake himself to the study of philosophy, where he may meet with arguments proper and fit to convince him of the truth of that philosophy; as another, betaking himself to the study of divinity, may consider arguments proper and fit to make him, whether it be in England, Holland, or Denmark, of the national profession, which he was not of before.

Just thus, and no otherwise, does twelvepence a Sunday, or any other penalty, laid on non-conformity, make men study and embrace the true religion; and whatever you will call the service it does, direct or indirect,

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near or at a distance, it is plain it produces that effect, and conduces to that end, merely by accident; and therefore must be allowed to be impertinent to be used to that purpose.

That your way of using force in matters of religion, even in a country where the magistrate is of the true religion, is absolutely impertinent, I shall further show you from your own position.

Here, in the entrance, give me leave to observe to you, that you confound two things very different, viz. your way of applying force, and the end for which you pretend to use it. And this, perhaps, may be it which contributes to cast that mist about your eyes, that you always return to the same place, and stick to the same gross mistake. For here you say, "Force, your way applied, *i. e.* to bring men to embrace the truth which must save them:" but, sir, to bring men to embrace the truth, is not your way of applying force, but the end for which you pretend it is applied. Your way to punish men, as you say, moderately for being dissenters from the national religion; this is your way of using force. Now, if in this way of using it, force does service merely by accident, you will then, I suppose, allow it to be absolutely impertinent. For you say, "If by doing service by accident, I mean doing it but seldom, and beside the intention of the agent, you assure me that it is not the thing you mean when you say force may, indirectly and at a distance, do some service." For in that use of force, which you defend, the effect is both intended by him that uses it, and withal, you "doubt not, so often attained, as abundantly to manifest the usefulness of it." Whereby it is plain the two marks, whereby you distinguished your indirect and at a distance usefulness, from that which is by accident, are that that by accident does service but seldom, and beside the intention of the agent, but yours the contrary.

First, as to the intention, you tell us, in the use of force, which you defend, "the effect is intended by him that uses it;" that is, those who made laws to punish non-conformists, designed those penalties to make

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all men, under their power, "consider so as to be convinced of, and embrace the truths that should save them." If one should ask you how you knew it to be their intention, can you say, they ever told you so? If they did not, then so far you and I know their intentions alike. Did they ever say so in those laws? nor that neither. Those versed, then, in the interpretation of laws, will tell you nothing can be known to be the intention of the law-makers in any law, of which the law is wholly silent: that way, then, you cannot know it to have been their intention, if the law says nothing of it. Whatever was the intention of former law-makers, if you had read with attention the last act of uniformity of Car. II. printed before the common-prayer-book, I conclude you would have been better satisfied about the intention of the then law-makers in that law; for I think nothing can be plainer to any one who will look into that statute, than that their only end in that law was, what they have expressed in these words: "And to the end that uniformity in the public worship of God (which is so much desired) may be speedily effected;" which was driven with such speed, that if all concerned had opportunity to get and peruse the then established liturgy, it is certain they had not over-much time seriously and deliberately to consider of all the parts of it before the day set for the use of it.

But you think they ought to have intended, and therefore they did: and I think they neither ought, nor could, in making those laws, intend so impracticable a thing; and therefore they did not. Which being as certain a way of knowledge as yours, if you know it by that way, it is possible you and I may at the same time know contraries.

But you know it, by their "having provided sufficient means of instruction for all under their care, in the true religion;" of this sufficient means, we have something to say in another place. Penalties laid expressly on one fault have no evidence that they were designed to mend another, though there are sufficient means provided of mending it, if men would make a sufficient use of them; unless those two faults are

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so connected, as one cannot be mended without the other. Now if men cannot conform, without so considering as to be convinced of, and embrace the truth that must save them; you may know that penalties laid on non-conformity were intended to make men so consider: but if men may conform without so considering, one cannot know nor conclude those penalties were intended to make men so consider, whatever provision there is made of means of instruction.

But you will say, it is evident that penalties on non-conformists were intended to make them use these means of instruction, because they are intended for the bringing men to church, the place of instruction. That they are intended to bring men to church, the place of preaching, that I grant; but that those penalties that are laid on them for not coming to church can be known thereby to be intended to make men so consider as to be convinced and embrace the true religion, that I deny: and it is utterly impossible it should be so, if what you say be true, where you tell us, that "the magistrates concern themselves for compliance or conformity, only as the fruit of their conviction." If, therefore, the magistrates are concerned for men's conformity, only as the fruit of their conviction, and coming to church be that conformity; coming to church cannot be intended as a means of their conviction: unless it be intended they should be convinced before they are convinced.

But to show you that you cannot pretend the penalty of laws for conformity to proceed from a care of the souls of all under the magistrate's power, and so to be intended to make them all consider, in any sense: can you, or any one, know, or suppose, that penalties, which are laid by the law on non-conformity, are intended to make all men consider; where it is known that a great number, under the magistrate's power, are dispensed with, and privileged from those penalties? How many, omitting the Jews, are there, for example, in the king of England's dominions, under his care and power, of the Walloon and French church; to whom force is never applied, and they live in security from it! How

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many pagans are there in the plantations, many whereof born in his dominions, of whom there was never any care taken that they should so much as come to church, or be in the least instructed in the Christian religion? And yet must we believe, or can you pretend, that the magistrate's use of force, against non-conformists, is to make all his subjects consider, "so as to be convinced of, and embrace the truth that must save them?" If you say, in your way you mean no such indulgence: I answer, the question is not of yours, but the magistrate's intention; though what your intention is, who would have the want of consideration, or knowledge, in conformists, exempt from force, is visible enough.

Again, Those penalties cannot be supposed to be intended to make men consider, which are laid on those who have, or may have already considered; and such you must grant to be the penalties laid in England on non-conformists, unless you will deny, that any non-conformist has, or can consider, so as to be convinced, or believe, and embrace the truth that must save him. So that you cannot vouch the intention of the magistrate, where his laws say nothing; much less affirm, that force is intended to produce a certain end in all his subjects, which is not applied to them all, and is applied to some who have attained that end already: unless you have a privilege to affirm, against all appearance, whatsoever may serve your cause. But to learn some moderation in this, I shall send you to my pagans and Mahometans. For whatever charitable wishes magistrates may sometimes have in their thoughts, which I meddle not with; nobody can say, that in making the laws, or in the use of force, we are speaking of, they intended to make men consider and examine, so as "to be convinced of, and heartily to embrace the truth that must save them," but he that gives himself the liberty to say any thing.

The service that force does, indirectly and at a distance, you tell us, in the following page, is to make people "apply themselves to the use of those means and helps, which are proper to make them what they are designed to be." In the case before us, What

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are men designed to be? Holy believers of the Gospel in this world, without which no salvation, no seeing of God in the next. Let us see now, whether force, your way applied, can be suited to such a design, and so intended for that end.

You hold, that all out of the national church, where the religion of the national church is true, should be punished, and ought to have force used to them: and again, you grant that those who are in the communion of the national church ought not to be punished, or be under the stroke of force; nor indeed in your way can they. If now the effect be to prevail with men to consider as they ought, so that they may become what they are designed to be: how can any one think, that you, and they who use force thus, intend, in the use of it, that men should really be Christians, both in persuasion and practice, without which there is no salvation, if they leave off force before they have attained that effect? Or how can it be imagined, that they intend any thing but conformity by their use of force, if they leave off the use of it as soon as men conform? unless you will say that an outward conformity to the national church, whose religion is the true religion, is such an embracing of the truth as is sufficient to salvation: or that an outward profession of the Christian religion is the same with being really a Christian; which possibly you will not be very forward to do, when you recollect what you meet with in the sermons and printed discourses of divines of the church of England, concerning the ignorance and irreligion of conformists themselves: for penalties can never be thought, by any one, but he that can think against common sense, and what he pleases, to be intended for any end; which by that constitution, and law whereby they are imposed, are to cease before that end be attained. And will you say, that all who are conformable have so well considered, that they believe, and heartily embrace the truths of the Gospel, that must save them: when perhaps it will be found that a great many conformists do not so much as understand them? But the ignorance or irreligiousness to be found amongst conformists, which your way of

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talking forces me in some places to take notice of, let me here tell you once for all, I lay not the blame of upon conformity, but upon your use of force to make men conform. For whatever the religion be, true or false, it is natural for force, and penalty so applied, to bring the irreligious, and those who are careless and unconcerned for the true, into the national profession: but whether it be fitter for such to be kept out, rather than by force to be driven into, the communion of any church, and owned as members of it; those who have a due care and respect for truly religious and pious conformists were best to consider.

But farther, if, as you say, the opposition to the true religion lies only in men's lusts, it having light and strength enough, were it not for that, to prevail: and it is upon that account only that force is necessary; there is no necessity at all to use force on men, only till they conform, and no farther; since I think you will not deny but that the corruption of human nature is as great in conformists as in non-conformists; in the professors of, as in the dissenters from, the national religion. And therefore either force was not necessary before, or else it is necessary still, after men are conformists; unless you will say, that it is harder for a man to be a professor, than a Christian indeed: and that the true religion, by its own light and strength, can, without the help of force, prevail over a man's lusts, and the corruption of his nature; but it has need of the help of force, to make him a conformist, and an outward professor. And so much for the effect, which is intended by him that uses it, in that use of force which you defend.

The other argument you bring to show, that your indirect and at a distance usefulness of force, your way applied, is not by accident, is the frequent success of it; which I think is not the true mark of what is not by accident: for an effect may not be by accident, though it has never been produced but once; and is certainly as little by accident the first time, as when it has been produced a thousand times. That then, by which any thing is excused from being by accident, is not the fre-

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quency of the event, but that whereon the frequency of the event depends, when frequent trials are made; and that is the proper, natural, direct efficacy of the cause or means, which produces the effect. As in the case before us, penalties are the cause or means used to produce an end; the proper and immediate effect of penalties is to produce some pain or inconvenience; and the natural effect of that is to make a man, who naturally flies from all pain or inconvenience, to endeavour to avoid; whereby it naturally and directly works upon the will of man, by proposing to him this unavoidable choice of doing some action, or enduring the pain or inconvenience of the penalty annexed to its omission. When the pain of doing the action is outweighed in the sense of him that lies under the penalty, the pain, that by the law is annexed to the omission, operates upon his will as naturally as thirteen ounces in one scale, laid against twelve ounces in the other, incline the balance, and bring it down on that side. And this is by a direct and natural efficacy, wherein there is nothing of chance.

Let us see, then, how far this will go in your indirect and at a distance usefulness. In your method, the action you propose to be done is considering, or a severe and impartial examining matters of religion, which, you tell us, men by their great negligence or aversion are kept from doing. What now is a proper means to produce this? "Penalties, without which, you tell us, it will not be done." How now is it applied in your method? Conformity, and men's neglect or aversion to it, is laid in one scale, and the penalty, joined to the omission of it, laid in the other; and in this case, if the inconvenience of the penalty overweighs the pains of, or aversion to conformity, it does by a direct and natural efficacy produce conformity: but if it produces a severe and impartial examination, that is merely by accident; because the inconvenience of the penalty is not laid against men's aversion or backwardness to examine impartially, as a counterbalance to that, but against their aversion or backwardness to conform; and so whatever it does, indirectly

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and at a distance, it is certain its making men severely and impartially examine, if ever that happens, is as much by accident, as it would be by accident, if a piece of lead in one scale, as a counterpoise to feathers in the opposite scale, should move or weigh down gold that was put in the scale of another pair of balances, which had no counterpoise laid against it. Unless you will say there is a necessary connexion between conformity and a severe and impartial examination.

But you will say, perhaps, that though it be not possible that penalties should produce examination but by mere accident, because examination has no necessary connexion with conformity, or the profession of any religion; yet since there are some who will not take up any profession without a severe and impartial examination, penalties for non-conformity will, by a direct and natural efficacy, produce examination in all such. To which I answer, That those are, if we may believe what you say, so very few, that this your remedy, which you put into the magistrate's hands to bring all his subjects to consider and examine, will not work upon one in a thousand; nay, it can work on none at all, to make them severely and impartially examine, but merely by accident. For if they are men, whom a slight and partial examination, which upon your principles you must say sufficed to make non-conformists, a slight and partial examination will as well serve to make them conformists; and so penalties laid on them to make them conform, can only by accident produce a severe and impartial examination, in such men, who can take up the profession of any religion without a severe and impartial examination; no more than it can otherwise than by accident produce any examination in those who, without any examination, can take up the profession of any religion.

And in those very few, who take not up the profession of any religion without a severe and impartial examination, that penalties can do any service, to bring them either to the truth that must save them, or so much as to outward conformity, but merely by accident; that is also evident. Because all such in a country,

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where they dissent from the national religion, must necessarily have severely and impartially examined already, or else you destroy the supposition this argument is built on, viz. that they are men who do severely and impartially examine before they choose. And if you lay, or continue your penalties on men, that have so examined; it is plain you use them instead of reasons and arguments: in which use of them you confess they have no proper efficacy, and therefore if they do any service, it is merely by accident.

But now let us see the success you boast of, and for that you tell us, that you doubt not but it is "so often attained, as abundantly to manifest the usefulness of it." You speak here of it as a thing tried, and so known, that you doubt not. Pray tell us where your moderate (for great ones you acknowledge to do harm, and to be useless) penalties have been used with such success, that we may be past doubt too. If you can show no such place, do you not vouch experience where you have none? and show a willingness not to doubt, where you have no assurance? In all countries, where any force is used to bring men to the profession of the national religion, and to outward conformity, it is not to be doubted but that force joining with their natural corruption, in bringing them into the way of preferment, countenance, protection, ease, and impunity, should easily draw in all the loose and careless in matters of religion, which are every where the far greater number: but is it those you count upon, and will you produce them as examples of what force has done to make men consider, study, and embrace the true religion? Did the penalties laid on non-conformity make you "consider, so as to study, be convinced, and embrace the true religion?" Or can you give an instance of any one, in whom it produced this effect? If you cannot, you will have some reason to doubt of what you have said, and not to be so confident that the effect you talk of is so often attained. Not that I deny, but that God may sometimes have made these punishments the occasions to men of setting themselves seriously on considering religion; and thence they may

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have come into the national religion upon a real conviction: but the instances of it I believe to be so few, that you will have reason to remember your own words, where you speak of such things as "Any way, at any time, upon any person, by any accident, may be useful towards the promoting of true religion: if men should thence take occasion to apply such things generally; who sees not, that however they might chance to hit right in some few cases, yet, upon the whole matter, they would certainly do a great deal more harm than good." You and I know a country wherein, not long since, greater severities were used than you pretend to approve of. Were there not, for all that, great numbers of several professions stood out, who, by your rule, ought now to have your moderate penalties tried upon them? And can you think less degrees of force can work, and often, as you say, prevail, where greater could not? But perhaps they might prevail on many of those to return, who having been brought into the communion of the church by former penal laws, have now upon the relaxation left it again. A manifest demonstration, is it not? that "their compliance was the fruit of their conviction; and that the magistrate was concerned for their compliance only as the fruit of their conviction:" when they, as soon as any relaxation of those laws took off the penalties, left again the communion of the national church? For the lessening the number of conformists is, I suppose, one of those things which you say your "eyes cannot but see at this time;" and which you, with concern, impute to the late relaxation: a plain evidence how presumable it is, even in your own opinion, that those who conform do it upon real conviction.

To conclude, these proofs, though I do not pretend to bring as good as the thing will admit, will serve my turn to show, that force is impertinent; since by your own confession it has no direct efficacy to convince men, and, by its being indirect and at a distance useful, is not at all distinguished from being barely so by accident: since you can neither prove it to be intended for that end, nor frequently to succeed; which are the two

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marks whereby you put a difference between indirect and at a distance, and by accident: this, I say, is enough to show what the author said is true, that the use of force is wholly impertinent; which, whatever others do, you upon another reason must be forced to allow.

You profess yourself of the church of England, and, if I may guess, are so far of it as to have subscribed the XXXIX. Articles; which if you have done, and assented to what you subscribed, you must necessarily allow that all force, used for the bringing men to the true religion, is "absolutely impertinent;" for that must be absolutely impertinent to be used as a means, which can contribute nothing at all to the end for which it is used. The end here is to make a man a true Christian, that he may be saved; and he is then, and then only, a true Christian, and in the way of salvation, when he believes, and with sincerity obeys the Gospel. By the thirteenth article of the church of England, you hold, that "works done before the grace of Christ, and the "inspiration of his Spirit, are not pleasing to God; for-"asmuch as they spring not of faith in Jesus Christ; "neither do they make men meet to receive grace, or, "as the school-authors say, deserve grace of congruity; "yea rather, for that they are not done as God has "willed and commanded them to be done, we doubt "not but they have the nature of sin." Now if it be impertinent to use force to make a man do more than he can, and a man can do nothing to procure grace, unless sin can procure it; and without grace a man cannot believe, or live so as to be a true Christian; it is certainly wholly impertinent to use force to bring a man to be truly a Christian. To hear and consider is in men's power, you will say, and to that force may be pertinent; I grant to make men hear, but not to make them consider in your sense, which, you tell us, is to "consider so as to embrace;" if you mean by embracing any thing but outward conformity: and that according to your article contributes nothing to the attaining of grace; because without grace your article says it is a sin; and to conform to, and outwardly profess a reli-

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gion which a man does not understand and heartily believe, every one, I think, judges to be a sin, and no fit means to procure the grace of God.

But you tell us, "That God denies his grace to none who seriously ask it." If that be so, methinks force should most properly and pertinently be used to make men seriously pray to God for grace. But how, I beseech you, will this stand with your thirteenth article? For if you mean by seriously, so as will make his seeking acceptable to God; that cannot be, because he is supposed yet to want grace, which alone can make it acceptable: and if his asking has the nature of sin, as in the article you do not doubt but it has, can you expect that sinning should procure the grace of God? You will I fear here, without some great help in a very nice distinction from the school-authors, be forced either to renounce your article in the plain sense of it, and so become a dissenter from the church of England; or else acknowledge force to be wholly impertinent to the business of true religion and salvation.

Another reason I gave against the usefulness of force in matters of religion was, "Because the magistrates of the world, being few of them in the right way,—not one of ten, take which side you will, perhaps not one of a hundred, being of the true religion,—it is likely your indirect way of using force would do a hundred, or at least ten times as much harm as good." To which you reply, "Which would have been to the purpose if you had asserted that every magistrate may use force, your indirect way (or any way) to bring men to his own religion, whatever that be. But if you assert no such thing, (as no man you think but an atheist will assert it) then this is quite beside the business." I think I have proved, that if magistrates of the true religion may use force to bring men to their religion, every magistrate may use force to bring men to his own religion, when he thinks it the true, and then do you look where the atheism will light.

In the next paragraph, having quoted these following words of mine, where I say, "Under another pretence, you put into the magistrate's hands as much force to

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bring them to his religion, as any the openest persecutors can pretend to. I ask what difference is there between punishing them to bring them to mass, and punishing them to make them consider those reasons and arguments which are proper and sufficient to convince them that they ought to go to mass?" You reply: "A question which you shall then think yourself obliged to answer, when I have produced those reasons and arguments which are proper and sufficient to convince men that they ought to go to mass." But if you had not omitted the three or four immediately preceding lines, (an art to serve a good cause, which puts me in mind of my pagans and Mahometans) the reader would have seen that your reply was nothing at all to my argument. My words were these,

"Especially, if you consider, that as the magistrate will certainly use it [force] to force men to hearken to the proper ministers of his religion, let it be what it will; so you having set no time nor bounds to this consideration of arguments and reasons short of being convinced, you under another," &c. My argument is to show of what advantage force, your way applied, is like to be to the true religion, since it puts as much force into the magistrate's hands as the openest persecutors can pretend to, which the magistrates of wrong persuasions may and will use as well as those of the true; because your way sets no other bounds to considering, short of complying. And then I ask, "What difference there is between punishing you to bring you to mass, or punishing you to consider those reasons and arguments which are proper and sufficient to convince you that you ought to go to mass?" To which you reply, That it is a "question you shall then think yourself obliged to answer, when I have produced those reasons and arguments that are proper and sufficient to convince men that they ought to go to mass." Whereas the objection is the same, whether there be, or be not, reasons and arguments proper to convince men that they ought to go to mass; for men must be punished on till they have so considered as to comply: and what difference is there then between punishing

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men to bring them to mass, and punishing them to make them consider so as to go to mass? But though I pretend not to produce any reasons and arguments proper and sufficient to convince you or all men, that they ought to go to mass; yet do you think there are none proper and sufficient to convince any men? and that all the papists in the world go to mass without believing it their duty? And whosoever believes it to be his duty, does it upon reasons and arguments, proper and sufficient to convince him, (though perhaps not to convince another) that it is so; or else I imagine he would never believe at all. What think you of those great numbers of Japaneses that resisted all sorts of torments, even to death itself, for the Romish religion? And had you been in France some years since, who knows but the arguments the king of France produced might have been proper and sufficient to have convinced you that you ought to go to mass? I do not by this think you less confident of the truth of your religion than you profess to be. But arguments, set on with force, have a strange efficacy upon human frailty; and he must be well assured of his own strength, who can peremptorily affirm, he is sure he should have stood what above a million of people sunk under: amongst which, it is great confidence to say, there was not one so well persuaded of the truth of his religion as you are of yours; though some of them gave great proofs of their persuasion in their sufferings for it. But what the necessary method of force may be able to do, to bring any one, in your sense, to any religion, *i. e.* to an outward profession of it; he that thinks himself secure against, must have a greater assurance of himself, than the weakness of decayed and depraved nature will well allow. If you have any spell against the force of arguments, driven with penalties and punishments, you will do well to teach it the world; for it is the hard luck of well-meaning people to be often misled by them; and even the confident themselves have not seldom fallen under them, and betrayed their weakness.

To my demanding if you meant "reasons and arguments proper and sufficient to convince men of the

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truth, why did you not say so?" You reply, "As if it were possible for any man that reads your answer to think otherwise." Whoever reads that passage in your A. p. 5, cannot possibly think you meant to speak out, and possibly you found some difficulty to add any thing to your words, (which are these, "Force used to bring men to consider reasons and arguments proper and sufficient to convince them") that might determine their sense. For if you had said, to convince them of truth; then the magistrate must have made laws, and used force, to make men search after truth in general, and that would not have served your turn: if you had said to convince them of the truth of the magistrate's religion, that would too manifestly have put the power in every magistrate's hands, which, you tell us, "none but an atheist will say." If you had said, to convince them of the truth of your religion, that had looked too ridiculous to be owned, though it were the thing you meant; and therefore in this strait, where nothing you could say would well fit your purpose, you wisely choose to leave the sense imperfect, and name nothing they were to be convinced of; but leave it to be collected by your reader out of your discourse, rather than add three words to make it good grammar, as well as intelligible sense.

To my saying, "That if you pretend it must be arguments to convince men of the truth, it would in this case do you little service; because the mass in France is as much supposed the truth, as the liturgy here:" You reply, "So that it seems, that, in my opinion, whatsoever is supposed the truth, it is the truth, for otherwise this reason of mine is none at all." If, in my opinion, the supposition of truth authorizes the magistrate to use the same means to bring men to it, as if it were true; my argument will hold good, without taking all to be true which some men suppose true. According to this answer of yours, to suppose or believe his religion the true, is not enough to authorize the magistrate to use force; he must know, *i. e.* be infallibly certain, that his is the true religion. We will for once suppose you our magistrate, with force pro-

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moting our national religion. I will not ask you, whether you know that all required of conformists is necessary to salvation: but will suppose one of my pagans asking you, whether you know Christianity to be the true religion? If you say, Yes; he will ask you how you know it? and no doubt but you will give the answer, whereby our Saviour proved his mission, John v. 36, that "the works which our Saviour did, bear witness of him, that the Father sent him." The miracles that Christ did, are a proof of his being sent from God, and so his religion the true religion. But then you will be asked again, whether you know that he did those miracles, as well as those who saw them done? If you answer, Yes; then it is plain that miracles are not yet withdrawn, but do still accompany the Christian religion with all the efficacy and evidence that they had upon the eye-witnesses of them; and then, upon your own grounds, there will be no necessity of the magistrate's assistance; miracles still supplying the want of it. If you answer, that matter of fact done out of your sight, at such a distance of time and place, cannot be known to you as certainly as it was to the eye-witnesses of it, but that you upon very good grounds firmly believe it; you are then come to believing that yours is the true religion, and if that be sufficient to authorize you to use force, it will authorize any other magistrate of any other religion to use force also. For whoever believes any thing, takes it to be true, and as he thinks upon good grounds; and those often who believe on the weakest grounds, have the strongest confidence: and thus all magistrates, who believe their religion to be true, will be obliged to use force to promote it, as if it were the true.

To my saying that the usefulness of force, your way applied, amounts to no more but this, that it is not impossible but that it may be useful: You reply, "I leave it to be judged by what has been said;" and I leave it to you yourself to judge: only, that you may not forget, I shall here remind you in short of some of the reasons I have to say so: 1. You grant that force has no direct efficacy to bring men to embrace the truth.

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2. You distinguish the indirect and at a distance usefulness of your force, from that which is barely by accident, by these two marks, viz. First, That punishment on dissenters for non-conformity is, by those that use it, intended to make men consider: and Secondly, That your moderate punishments, by experience, are found often successful; and your having neither of these marks, it must be concluded to be useful only by accident: and such an usefulness, as I said, "One cannot deny to auricular confession, doing of penance, going pilgrimages to saints, and what not? Yet our church does not think fit to use them; though it connot be denied but they may have some of your indirect and at a distance usefulness; that is, perhaps may do some service indirectly, and by accident." If the intention of those that use them, and the success they will tell you they find in the use of them, be a proof of doing service more than by accident; that cannot be denied to them more than to penalties, your way applied. To which let me add, that the niceness and difficulty there is, to hit that just degree of force, which, according to your hypothesis, must be neither so much as to do harm, nor so little as to be ineffectual,—for you yourself cannot determine it,—makes its usefulness yet more uncertain and accidental. And after all, let its efficacy to work upon men's minds be what it will, great or little, it being sure to be employed ten, or, possibly, a hundred times to bring men to error, for once that it is employed to bring men to the truth; and where it chances to be employed on the side of truth, it being liable to make a hundred, or perhaps a thousand outward conformists, for one true and sincere convert; I leave it also to be judged what usefulness it is like to be of.

To show the usefulness of force, your way applied, I said, "Where the law punished dissenters without telling them it is to make them consider, they may through ignorance and oversight neglect to do it:" Your answer is, "But where the law provides sufficient means of instruction for all, as well as punishment for dissenters, it is so plain to all concerned, that the pu-

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nishment is intended to make them consider, that you see no danger of men's neglecting to do it, through ignorance or oversight." I hope you mean by consider, so to consider as not only to embrace in an outward profession, for then all you say is but a poor fallacy, for such a considering amounts to no more but bare outward conformity; but so to consider, study, and examine matters of religion, as really to embrace what one is convinced to be the true, with faith and obedience. If it be so plain and easy to understand, that a law, that speaks nothing of it, should yet be intended to make men consider, search, and study, to find out the truth that must save them; I wish you had showed us this plainness. For I confess many of all degrees, that I have purposely asked about it, did not ever see, or so much as dream, that the act of uniformity, or against conventicles, or the penalties in either of them, were ever intended to make men seriously study religion, and make it their business to find the truth which must save them; but barely to make men conform. But perhaps you have met with handicraftsmen, and country farmers, maid-servants, and day-labourers, who have quicker understandings, and reason better about the intention of the law; for these as well as others are concerned. If you have not, it is to be feared your saying "it is so plain, that you see no danger of men's neglecting to do it, through ignorance or oversight," is more for its serving your purpose, than from any experience you have that it is so.

When you will inquire into this matter, you will, I guess, find the people so ignorant amidst that great plainness you speak of, that not one of twenty of any degree, amongst the conformists or non-conformists, ever understood the penalty of twelvepence a Sunday, or any other of our penal laws against non-conformity, to be intended to set men upon studying the true religion, and impartially examining what is necessary to salvation. And if you would come to Hudibras's decision, I believe he would have a good wager of it, who should give you a guinea for each one who had thought so, and receive but a shilling for every one who had

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not. Indeed, you do not say, it is plain every where, but only "where the law provides sufficient means of instruction for all, as well as punishments for dissenters." From whence, I think it will follow, that that contributes nothing to make it plain; or else that the law has not provided sufficient means of instruction in England, where so very few find this to be so plain. If by this sufficient provision of means of instruction for all, you mean persons maintained at the public charge to preach and officiate in the public exercise of the national religion; I suppose you needed not this restriction, there being few places which have an established national religion, where there is not such means of instruction provided; if you intend any other means of instruction, I know none the law has provided in England but the XXXIX Articles, the liturgy, and the Scripture; and how either of them by itself, or these altogether, with a national clergy, make it plain, that the penalties laid on non-conformity are intended to make men consider, study, and impartially examine matters of religion, you would do well to show. For magistrates usually know, (and therefore make their laws accordingly) that the people seldom carry either their interpretation or practice beyond what the express letter of the law requires of them. You would do well also to show, that a sufficient provision of means of instruction, cannot but be understood to require an effectual use of them, which the law that makes that provision says nothing of; but, on the contrary, contents itself with something very short of it: for conformity or coming to church, is at least as far from considering, studying, and impartially examining matters of religion, so as to embrace the truth upon conviction and with an obedient heart; as being present at a discourse concerning mathematics, and studying mathematics, so as to become a knowing mathematician, are different one from the other.

People generally think they have done their duties abundantly, if they have been at church, whether they mind any thing done there or no: this they call serving of God, as if it were their whole duty; so backward

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are they to understand more, though it be plain the law of God expressly requires more. But that they have fully satisfied the law of the land, nobody doubts; nor is it easy to answer what was replied to me on this occasion, viz. If the magistrate intended any thing more in those laws but conformity, would he not have said it? To which let me add, if the magistrate intended conformity as the fruit of conviction, would he not have taken some care to have them instructed before they conformed, and examined when they did? But it is presumable their ignorance, corruption, and lusts, all drop off in the church porch, and that they become perfectly good Christians as soon as they have taken their seats in the church.

If there be any whom your example or writing hath inspired with acuteness enough to find out this; I suspect the vulgar, who have scarce time and thought enough to make inferences from the law, which scarce one of ten of them ever so much as reads, or perhaps understands when read, are still, and will be ignorant of it: and those who have the time and abilities to argue about it, will find reason to think that those penalties were not intended to make men examine the doctrine and ceremonies of religion; since those who should examine, are prohibited by those very laws to follow their own judgments, (which is the very end and use of examination) if they at all differ from the religion established by law. Nor can it appear so "plain to all concerned, that the punishment is intended to make them consider and examine," when they see the punishments you say are to make people consider, spare those who consider and examine matters of religion as little as any of the most ignorant and careless dissenters.

To my saying, "Some dissenters may have considered already, and then force employed upon them must needs be useless; unless you can think it useful to punish a man to make him do that which he has done already:" You reply, "No man who rejects truth necessary to his salvation, has considered already as he ought to consider." The words "as he ought," are not, as I take it, in the question: and so your answer is, "No man

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who rejects the truth necessary to his salvation, hath considered, studied, or examined matters of religion." But we will let that go: and yet, with that allowance, your answer will be nothing to the purpose, unless you will dare to say, that all dissenters reject truth necessary to salvation. For without the supposition, that all dissenters reject the truth necessary to salvation, the argument and answer will stand thus: It may be useless to punish all dissenters to make them consider, because some of them may have considered already. To which the answer is, Yes, some of them may have considered already; but those who reject truth necessary to their salvation, have not considered as they ought.

I said, "The greatest part of mankind, being not able to discern betwixt truth and falsehood, that depends upon long and many proofs, and remote consequences; nor having ability enough to discover the false grounds, and resist the captious and fallacious arguments of learned men versed in controversies; are so much more exposed, by the force which is used to make them hearken to the information and instruction of men appointed to it by the magistrate, or those of his religion, to be led into falsehood and error, than they are likely this way to be brought to embrace the truth which must save them; by how much the national religions of the world are, beyond comparison, more of them false or erroneous, than such as have God for their author, and truth for their standard." You reply, "If the first part of this be true, then an infallible guide, and implicit faith, are more necessary than ever you thought them." Whether you conclude from thence or no, that then there will be a necessity of an infallible guide, and an implicit faith, it is nevertheless true, that the greatest part of men are unable to discern, as I said, between truth and falsehood depending upon long and many proofs, &c. But whether that will make an infallible guide necessary or no, imposition in matters of religion certainly will: since there can be nothing more absurd imaginable, than that a man should take upon him to impose on others in matters of their eternal concernment, without being, or so much as pretending to be infallible:

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for colour it with the name of considering as much as you please, as long as it is to make men consider as they ought, and considering as they ought, is so to consider as to embrace; the using of force to make men consider, and the using of force to make them embrace any doctrine or opinion, is the same thing: and to show a difference betwixt imposing an opinion, and using force to make it be embraced, would require such a piece of subtilty, as I heard lately from a learned man out of the pulpit, who told us, that though two things, he named, were all one, yet for distinction's sake he would divide them. Your reason for the necessity of an infallible guide is, "For if the greatest part of mankind be not able to discern betwixt truth and falsehood, in matters concerning their salvation, (as I must mean if I speak to the purpose) their condition must needs be very hazardous, if they have not some guide or judge, to whose determination and direction they may securely resign themselves." And therefore they must resign themselves to the determination and direction of the civil magistrate, or be punished. Here it is like you will have something again to say to my modesty and conscience, for imputing to you what you nowhere say. I grant it, in direct words, but in effect, as plainly as may be. The magistrate may impose sound creeds and decent ceremonies, *i. e.* such as he thinks fit, for what is sound and decent he I hope must be judge; and if he be judge of what is sound and decent, it amounts to no more but what he thinks fit: and if it be not what he thinks fit, why is one ceremony preferred to another? Why one doctrine of the Scripture put into the creed and articles, and another as sound left out? They are truths necessary to salvation. We shall see that in good time: here only I ask, does the magistrate only believe them to be truths and ceremonies necessary to salvation, or does he certainly know them to be so? If you say he only believes them to be so, and that that is enough to authorize him to impose them, you, by your own confession, authorize magistrates to impose what they think necessary for the salvation of their subjects' souls; and so the king of France did what he was obliged to,

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when he said he would have all his subjects saved, and so fell to dragooning.

If you say the magistrate certainly knows them to be necessary to salvation, we are luckily come to an infallible guide. Well then, the sound creeds are agreed on; the confession and liturgy are framed; the ceremonies pitched on; and the terms of communion thus set up; you have religion established by law: and what now is the subject to do? He is to conform. No; he must first consider. Who bids him consider? Nobody: he may, if he pleases; but the law says nothing to him of it: consider or not consider, if he conforms, it is well, and he is approved of and admitted. He does consider the best he can, but finds some things he does not understand, other things he cannot believe, assent, or consent to. What now is to be done with him? He must either be punished on, or resign himself up to the determination and direction of the civil magistrate; which, till you can find a better name for it, we will call implicit faith. And thus you have provided a remedy for the hazardous condition of weak understandings, in that which you suppose necessary in the case, viz. an infallible guide and implicit faith, in matters concerning men's salvation.

But you say, "For your part, you know of no such guide of God's appointing." Let that be your rule, and the magistrate with his coactive power will be left out too. You think there is no need of any such; because notwithstanding the long and many proofs and remote consequences, the false grounds and the captious and fallacious arguments of learned men versed in controversies "with which I (as well as those of the Roman communion) endeavour to amuse you; through the goodness of God, the truth which is necessary to salvation lies so obvious and exposed to all that sincerely and diligently seek it, that no such person shall ever fail of attaining the knowledge of it." This then is your answer, that "truths necessary to salvation are obvious;" so that those who seek them sincerely and diligently are not in danger to be misled or exposed in those to error, by the weakness of their under-

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standings. This will be a good answer to what I objected from the danger most are in to be led into error, by the magistrate's adding force to the arguments for their national established religions, when you have shown that nothing is wont to be imposed in national religions but what is necessary to salvation, or, which will a little better accommodate your hypothesis, when you can show that nothing is imposed, or required for communion with the church of England, but what is necessary to salvation, and consequently is very easy and obvious to be known, and distinguished from falsehood. And indeed, besides what you say here, upon your hypothesis, that force is lawful only because it is necessary to bring men to salvation; it cannot be lawful to use it, to bring men to any thing but what is absolutely necessary to salvation. For if the lawfulness of force be only from the need men have of it to bring them to salvation, it cannot lawfully be used to bring men to that which they do not need, or is not necessary to their salvation; for in such an application of it, it is not needful to their salvation. Can you therefore say, that there is nothing required to be believed and professed in the church of England, but what lies "so obvious and exposed to all that sincerely and diligently seek it, that no such person shall ever fail of attaining the knowledge of it?" What think you of St. Athanasius's Creed? Is the sense of that so obvious and exposed to every one who seeks it; which so many learned men have explained so different ways, and which yet a great many profess they cannot understand? Or is it necessary to your or my salvation, that you or I should believe and pronounce all those damned who do not believe that creed, *i. e.* every proposition in it? which I fear would extend to not a few of the church of England; unless we can think that people believe, *i. e.* assent to the truth of propositions they do not at all understand. If ever you were acquainted with a country parish, you must needs have a strange opinion of them, if you think all the ploughmen and milkmaids at church understood all the propositions in Athanasius's Creed: it is more, truly, than I should be apt to think of any one of them;

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and yet I cannot hence believe myself authorized to judge or pronounce them all damned: it is too bold an intrenching on the prerogative of the Almighty; to their own Master they stand or fall.

The doctrine of original sin is that which is professed and must be owned by the members of the church of England, as is evident from the XXXIX Articles, and several passages in the liturgy: and yet I ask you, whether this be "so obvious and exposed to all that diligently and sincerely seek the truth," that one who is in the communion of the church of England, sincerely seeking the truth, may not raise to himself such difficulties concerning the doctrine of original sin as may puzzle him, though he be a man of study; and whether he may not push his inquiries so far, as to be staggered in his opinion?

If you grant me this, as I am apt to think you will, then I inquire whether it be not true, notwithstanding what you say concerning the plainness and obviousness of truths necessary to salvation, that a great part of mankind may not be able to discern between truth and falsehood, in several points, which are thought so far to concern their salvation, as to be made necessary parts of the national religion?

If you say it may be so, then I have nothing further to inquire; but shall only advise you not to be so severe hereafter in your censure of Mr. Reynolds, as you are where you tell me, that "famous instance I give of the two Reynolds's is not of any moment to prove the contrary; unless I can undertake, that he that erred was as sincere in his inquiry after that truth as I suppose him able to examine and judge."

You will, I suppose, be more charitable another time, when you have considered that neither sincerity nor freedom from error, even in the established doctrines of their own church, is the privilege of those who join themselves in outward profession to any national church whatsoever. And it is not impossible, that one, who has subscribed the XXXIX Articles, may yet make it a question, "Whether it may be truly said that God imputes the first sin of Adam to his posterity?" &c.

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But we are apt to be so fond of our own opinions, and almost infallibility, that we will not allow them to be sincere who quit our communion; whilst, at the same time, we tell the world, it is presumable, that all who embrace it do it sincerely, and upon conviction; though we cannot but know many of them to be but loose, inconsiderate, and ignorant people. This is all the reason you have, when you speak of the Reynolds's, to suspect one of the brothers more than the other: and to think that Mr. Chillingworth had not as much sincerity when he quitted, as when he returned to the church of England, is a partiality which nothing can justify without pretending to infallibility.

To show that you do not fancy your force to be useful, but that you "judge so upon just and sufficient grounds, you tell us, the strong probability of its success is grounded upon the consideration of human nature, and the general temper of mankind, apt to be wrought upon by the method you speak of, and upon the indisputable attestation of experience." The consideration of human nature, and the general temper of mankind, will teach one this, that men are apt, in things within their power, to be wrought upon by force, and the more wrought upon, the greater the force or punishments are: so that where moderate penalties will not work, great severities will. Which consideration of human nature, if it be a just ground to judge any force useful, will, I fear, necessarily carry you, in your judgment, to severities beyond the moderate penalties so often mentioned in your system, upon a strong probability of the success of greater punishments, where less would not prevail.

But if to consider so as you require, *i. e.* so as to embrace and believe, be not in their power, then no force at all, great or little, is or can be useful. You must therefore (consider it which way you will) either renounce all force as useful, or pull off your mask, and own all the severities of the cruellest persecutors.

The other reason of your judging force to be useful, you say, is grounded on the indisputable attestation of experience. Pray tell us where you have this attestation

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of experience for your moderate, which is the only useful force: name the country where true religion or sound Christianity has been nationally received, and established by moderate penal laws, that the observing persons you appeal to may know where to employ their observation: tell us how long it was tried, and what was the success of it? And where there has been the relaxation of such moderate penal laws, the fruits whereof have continually been Epicurism and atheism? Till you do this, I fear that all the world will think there is a more indisputable attestation of experience for the success of dragooning, and the severities you condemn, than of your moderate method; which we shall compare with the king of France's, and see which is most successful in making proselytes to church conformity, (for yours as well as his reach no further than that) when you produce your examples: the confident talk whereof is good to countenance a cause, though experience there be none in the case.

But you "appeal, you say, to all observing persons, whether wherever true religion or sound Christianity have been nationally received and established by moderate penal laws, it has not always visibly lost ground by the relaxation of those laws?" True or false religions, sound or unsound Christianity, wherever established into national religions by penal laws, always have lost, and always will lose ground, *i. e.* lose several of their conforming professors, upon the relaxation of those laws. But this concerns not the true, more than other religions, nor is any prejudice to it; but only shows that many are, by the penalties of the law, kept in the communion of the national religion, who are not really convinced or persuaded of it: and therefore, as soon as liberty is given, they own the dislike they had many of them before, and out of persuasion, curiosity, &c. seek out and betake themselves to some other profession. This need not startle the magistrates of any religion, much less those of the true; since they will be sure to retain those, who more mind their secular interest than the truth of religion, who are every where the greater number, by the advantages of countenance and prefer-

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ment: and if it be the true religion, they will retain those also who are in earnest about it, by the strong tie of conscience and conviction.

You go on, "Whether sects and heresies (even the wildest and most absurd, and even Epicurism and atheism) have not continually thereupon spread themselves, and whether the very life of Christianity has not sensibly decayed, as well as the number of sound professors of it been daily lessened upon it?" As to atheism and Epicurism, whether they spread more under toleration, or national religions, established by moderate penal laws; when you show us the countries where fair trial hath been made of both, that we may compare them together, we shall better be able to judge.

"Epicurism and atheism," say you, "are found constantly to spread themselves upon the relaxation of moderate penal laws." We will suppose your history to be full of instances of such relaxations, which you will in good time communicate to the world, that wants this assistance from your observation. But were this to be justified out of history, yet would it not be any argument against toleration; unless your history can furnish you with a new sort of religion founded in atheism. However, you do well to charge the spreading of atheism upon toleration in matters of religion, as an argument against those who deny atheism, which takes away all religion, to have any right to toleration at all. But perhaps, as is usual for those who think all the world should see with their eyes, and receive their systems for unquestionable verities, zeal for your own way makes you call all atheism that agrees not with it. That which makes me doubt of this are these following words: "Not to speak of what at this time our eyes cannot but see, for fear of giving offence: though I hope it will be none to any that have a just concern for truth and piety, to take notice of the books and pamphlets which now fly so thick about this kingdom, manifestly tending to the multiplying of sects and divisions, and even to the promoting of scepticism in religion amongst us. In which number, you say, you shall not much need my pardon, if

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you reckon the First and Second Letter concerning Toleration." Wherein, by a broad insinuation, you impute the spreading of atheism amongst us to the late relaxation made in favour of protestant dissenters: and yet all that you can take notice of as a proof of this is, "the books and pamphlets which now fly so thick about this kingdom, manifestly tending to the multiplying of sects and divisions, and even to the promoting of scepticism in religion amongst us;" and, for instance, you name the First and Second Letter concerning Toleration. If one may guess at the others by these, the atheism and scepticism you accuse them of will have but little more in it than an opposition to your hypothesis; on which the whole business of religion must so turn, that whatever agrees not with your system must presently, by interpretation, be concluded to tend to the promoting of atheism or scepticism in religion. For I challenge you to show, in either of those two letters you mention, one word tending to Epicurism, atheism, or scepticism in religion.

But, sir, against the next time you are to give an account of books and pamphlets tending to the promoting scepticism in religion amongst us, I shall mind you of the Third Letter concerning Toleration, to be added to the catalogue, which asserting and building upon this, that "true religion may be known by those who profess it to be the only true religion," does not a little towards betraying the Christian religion to sceptics. For what greater advantage can be given them, than to teach, that one may know the true religion? thereby putting into their hands a right to demand it to be demonstrated to them, that the Christian religion is true, and bringing on the professors of it a necessity of doing it. I have heard it complained of as one great artifice of sceptics, to require demonstrations where they neither could be had, nor were necessary. But if the true religion may be known to men to be so, a sceptic may require, and you cannot blame him if he does not receive your religion, upon the strongest probable arguments, without demonstration.

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And if one should demand of you demonstration of the truths of your religion, which, I beseech you, would you do, either renounce your assertion, that it may be known to be true, or else undertake to demonstrate it to him?

And as for the decay of the very life and spirit of Christianity, and the spreading of Epicurism amongst us: I ask, what can more tend to the promoting of them than this doctrine, which is to be found in the same letter, viz. That it is presumable that those who conform, do it upon reason and conviction? When you can instance in any thing so much tending to the promoting of scepticism in religion and Epicurism, in the first or second letter concerning toleration, we shall have reason to think you have some ground for what you say.

As to Epicurism, the spreading whereof you likewise impute to the relaxation of your moderate penal laws; that, so far as it is distinct from atheism, I think regards men's lives more than their religions, *i. e.* speculative opinions in religion and ways of worship, which is what we mean by religion, as concerned in toleration. And for the toleration of corrupt manners, and the debaucheries of life, neither our author nor I do plead for it; but say it is properly the magistrate's business by punishments to restrain and suppress them. I do not therefore blame your zeal against atheism and Epicurism; but you discover a great zeal against something else in charging them on toleration, when it is in the magistrate's power to restrain and suppress them by more effectual laws than those for church conformity. For there are those who will tell you, that an outward profession of the national religion, even where it is the true religion, is no more opposite to, or inconsistent with, atheism or Epicurism, than the owning of another religion, especially any Christian profession, that differs from it. And therefore you in vain impute atheism or Epicurism to the relaxation of penal laws, that require no more than an outward conformity to the national church.

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As to the sects and unchristian divisions, (for other divisions there may be without prejudice to Christianity) at whose door they chiefly ought to be laid, I have showed you elsewhere.

One thing I cannot but take notice of here, that having named "sects, heresies, Epicurism, atheism, and a decay of the spirit and life of Christianity," as the fruits of relaxation, for which you had the attestation of former experience, you add these words, "Not to speak of what our eyes at this time cannot but see, for fear of giving offence." Whom is it, I beseech you, you are so afraid of offending, if you should speak of the "Epicurism, atheism, and decay of the spirit and life of Christianity" amongst us? But I see, he that is so moderate in one part of his letter, that he will not take upon him to teach law-makers and governors, even what they cannot know without being taught by him; *i. e.* what he calls moderate penalties or force; may yet, in another part of the same letter, by broad insinuations, use reproaches, wherein it is a hard matter to think law-makers and governors are not meant. But whoever be meant, it is at least advisable in accusations that are easier suggested than made out, to cast abroad the slander in general, and leave others to apply it, for fear those who are named, and so justly offended with a false imputation, should be entitled to ask, as in this case, how it appears "that sects and heresies have multiplied, Epicurism and atheism spread themselves, and that the life and spirit of Christianity is decayed" more within these two years, than it was before; and that all this mischief is owing to the late relaxation of the penal laws against protestant dissenters?

You go on, "And if these have always been the fruits of the relaxation of moderate penal laws, made for the preserving and advancing true religion; you think this consideration alone is abundantly sufficient to show the usefulness and benefit of such laws. For if these evils have constantly sprung from the relaxation of those laws, it is evident they were prevented before by those laws." One would think, by your

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saying, "always been the fruits, and constantly sprung," that moderate penal laws, for preserving the true religion, had been the constant practice of all Christian commonwealths; and that relaxations of them, in favour of a free toleration, had frequently happened; and that there were examples, both of the one and the other, as common and known, as of princes that have persecuted for religion, and learned men who have employed their skill to make it good. But till you show us in what ages or countries your moderate establishments were in fashion, and where they were again removed to make way for our author's toleration; you to as little purpose talk of the fruits of them, as if you should talk of the fruit of a tree which nobody planted, or was nowhere suffered to grow till one might see what fruit came from it.

Having laid it down as one of the conditions for a fair debate of this controversy, "That it should be without supposing all along your church in the right, and your religion the true;" I add these words: "Which can no more be allowed to you *in this case*, whatever your church or religion be, than it can be to a papist or a Lutheran, a presbyterian or an anabaptist; nay, no more to you, than it can be allowed to a Jew or Mahometan." To which you reply, "No, sir? Not whatever your church or religion be? That seems somewhat hard. And you think I might have given you some reason for what I say; for certainly it is not so self-evident as to need no proof. But you think it is no hard matter to guess at my reason, though I did not think fit expressly to own it. For it is obvious enough, there can be no other reason for this assertion of mine, but either the equal truth, or at least the equal certainty (or uncertainty) of all religions. For whoever considers my assertion, must see, that to make it good I shall be obliged to maintain one of these two things: either, 1. That no religion is the true religion, in opposition to other religions: which makes all religions true or false, and so either way indifferent. Or, 2. That though some one religion be the true religion,

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yet no man can have any more reason than another man of another religion may have to believe his to be the true religion: which makes all religions equally certain, (or uncertain, whether I please) and so renders it vain and idle to inquire after the true religion, and only a piece of good luck if any man be of it; and such good luck as he can never know that he has, till he come into the other world. Whether of these two principles I will own, you know not. But certainly one or other of them lies at the bottom with me, and is the lurking supposition upon which I build all that I say."

Certainly no, sir, neither of these reasons you have so ingenuously and friendly found out for me, lies at the bottom; but this, that whatever privilege or power you claim, upon your supposing yours to be the true religion, is equally due to another, who supposes his to be the true religion, upon the same claim: and therefore that is no more to be allowed to you than to him. For whose is really the true religion, yours or his, being the matter in contest betwixt you, your supposing can no more determine it on your side, than his supposing on his; unless you can think you have a right to judge in your own cause. You believe yours to be the true religion, so does he believe his: you say you are certain of it; so says he, he is: you think you have "arguments proper and sufficient" to convince him, if he would consider them; the same thinks he of his. If this claim, which is equally on both sides, be allowed to either, without any proof; it is plain he, in whose favour it is allowed, is allowed to be judge in his own cause, which nobody can have a right to be, who is not at least infallible. If you come to arguments and proofs, which you must do, before it can be determined whose is the true religion, it is plain your supposition is not allowed.

In our present case, in using punishments in religion, your supposing yours to be the true religion, gives you or your magistrate no more advantage over a papist, presbyterian, or Mahometan, or more reason to punish

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either of them for his religion, than the same supposition in a papist, presbyterian, or Mahometan, gives any of them, or a magistrate of their religion, advantage over you, or reason to punish you for your religion: and therefore this supposition, to any purpose or privilege of using force, is no more to be allowed to you than to any one of any other religion. This the words, *in this case*, which I there used, would have satisfied any other to have been my meaning: but whether your charity made you not to take notice of them, or the joy of such an advantage as this not to understand them; this is certain, you were resolved not to lose the opportunity, such a place as this afforded you, of showing your gift in commenting and guessing shrewdly at a man's reasons, when he does not think fit expressly to own them himself.

I must own you are a very lucky hand at it; and as you do it here upon the same ground, so it is just with the same success, as you in another place have exercised your logic on my saying something to the same purpose as I do here. But, sir, if you will add but one more to your plentiful stock of distinctions, and observe the difference there is between the ground of any one's supposing his religion is true, and the privilege he may pretend to by supposing it true, you will never stumble at this again; but you will find, that though, upon the former of these accounts, men of all religions cannot be equally allowed to suppose their religions true, yet in reference to the latter, the supposition may and ought to be allowed or denied equally to all men. And the reason of it is plain, viz. because the assurance wherewith one man supposes his religion to be true, being no more an argument of its truth to another than *vice versâ*, neither of them can claim by the assurance, wherewith he supposes his religion the true, any prerogative or power over the other, which the other has not by the same title an equal claim to over him. If this will not serve to spare you the pains another time of any more such reasonings, as we have twice had on this subject, I think I shall be forced to

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send you to my Mahometans or pagans: and I doubt whether I am not less civil to your parts than I should be, that I do not send you to them now.

You go on, and say, "But as unreasonable as this condition is, you see no need you have to decline it, nor any occasion I had to impose it upon you. For certainly the making what I call your new method consistent and practicable, does no way oblige you to suppose all along your religion the true, as I imagine." And as I imagine it does: for without that supposition, I would fain have you show me, how it is in any one country practicable to punish men to bring them to the true religion. For if you will argue for force, as necessary to bring men to the true religion, without supposing yours to be it; you will find yourself under some such difficulty as this, that then it must be first determined, (and you will require it should be) which is the true religion, before any one can have a right to use force to bring men to it; which, if every one did not determine for himself, by supposing his own the true, nobody, I think, will desire toleration any longer than till that be settled.

You go on: "No, sir; it is enough for that purpose that there is one true religion, and but one." Suppose not the national religion, established by law in England, to be that, and then even upon your principles of its being useful, and that the magistrate has a commission to use force for the promoting the true religion, prove, if you please, that the magistrate has a power to use force to bring men to the national religion in England. For then you must prove the national religion, as established by law in England, to be that one true religion, and so the true religion; that he rejects the true religion who dissents from any part of it; and, so rejecting the true religion, cannot be saved. But of this more in another place.

Your other two suppositions, which you join to the foregoing, are, "That that religion may be known by those who profess it, to be the only true religion; and may also be manifested to be such by them to others, so far at least, as to oblige them to receive it, and to leave them without excuse, if they do not."

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These, you say, are suppositions, "enough for the making your method consistent and practicable." They are, I guess, more than enough, for you, upon them, to prove any national religion in the world the only true religion. And till you have proved (for you profess here to have quitted the supposition of any one's being true, as necessary to your hypothesis) some national religion to be that only true religion, I would gladly know how it is any where practicable to use force to bring men to the true religion.

You suppose "there is one true religion, and but one." In this we are both agreed: and from hence, I think, it will follow, since whoever is of this true religion shall be saved, and without being of it no man shall be saved, that upon your second and third suppositions it will be hard to show any national religion to be this only true religion. For who is it will say, he knows, or that it is knowable, that any national religion (wherein must be comprehended all that, by the penal laws, he is required to embrace) is that only true religion, which if men reject they shall, and which if they embrace they shall not, miss salvation? Or can you undertake that any national religion in the world can be manifested to be such, *i. e.* in short, to contain all things necessary to salvation, and nothing but what is so? For that, and that alone, is the one only true religion, without which nobody can be saved, and which is enough for the salvation of every one who embraces it. And therefore whatever is less or more than this, is not the only true religion, or that which there is a necessity for their salvation men should be forced to embrace.

I do not hereby deny, that there is any national religion which contains all that is necessary to salvation; for so doth the Romish religion, which is not, for all that, so much as a true religion. Nor do I deny, that there are national religions that contain all things necessary to salvation, and nothing inconsistent with it, and so may be called true religions. But since they all of them join with what is necessary to salvation a great deal that is not so, and make that as necessary to communion as what is necessary to salvation, not

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suffering any one to be of their communion, without taking all together; nor to live amongst them free from punishment, out of their communion; will you affirm, that any of the national religions of the world, which are imposed by penal laws, and to which men are driven with force, can be said to be that one only true religion, which if men embrace they shall be saved, and which if they embrace not they shall be damned? And therefore your two suppositions, true or false, are not enough to make it practicable, upon your principles of necessity, to use force upon dissenters from the national religion, though it contain in it nothing but truth; unless that which is required to communion be all necessary to salvation. For whatever is not necessary to salvation, there is no necessity any one should embrace. So that whenever you speak of the true religion, to make it to your purpose, you must speak only of what is necessary to salvation; unless you will say, that in order to the salvation of men's souls, it is necessary to use force to bring them to embrace something, that is not necessary to their salvation. I think that neither you, or any body else, will affirm, that it is necessary to use force to bring men to receive all the truths of the Christian religion, though they are truths God has thought fit to reveal. For then, by your own rule, you, who profess the Christian religion, must know them all, and must be able to manifest them to others; for it is on that here you ground the necessity and reasonableness of penalties used to bring men to embrace the truth. But I suspect it is the good word religion, (as in other places other words) has misled you, whilst you content yourself with good sounds, and some confused notions, that usually accompany them, without annexing to them any precise, determined signification. To convince you that it is not without ground I say this, I shall desire you but to set down what you mean here by true religion, that we may know what in your sense is, and what is not contained in it. Would you but do this fairly, and define your words, or use them in one constant settled sense, I think the controversy between you and me would be at an end, without any farther trouble.

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Having showed of what advantage they are like to be to you for the making your method practicable; in the next place let us consider your suppositions themselves. As to the first, "there is one true religion, and but one," we are agreed. But what you say in the next place, that "that one true religion may be known by those who profess it," will need a little examination. As first, it will be necessary to inquire what you mean by known; whether you mean by it knowledge properly so called, as contradistinguished to belief, or only the assurance of a firm belief? If the latter, I leave you your supposition to make your use of it: only with this desire, that to avoid mistakes, when you do make any use of it, you would call it believing. If you mean, that the true religion may be known with the certainty of knowledge properly so called; I ask you farther, whether that true religion be to be known by the light of nature, or needed a divine revelation to discover it? If you say, as I suppose you will, the latter; then I ask whether the making out of that to be a divine revelation depends not upon particular matters of fact, whereof you were no eye-witness, but were done many ages before you were born? and if so, by what principles of science they can be known to any man now living?

The articles of my religion, and of a great many such other short-sighted people as I am, are articles of faith, which we think there are so good grounds to believe, that we are persuaded to venture our eternal happiness on that belief: and hope to be of that number of whom our Saviour said, "Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." But we neither think that God requires, nor has given us faculties capable of knowing in this world several of those truths which are to be believed to salvation. If you have a religion, all whose general truths are either self-evident, or capable of demonstration, (for matters of fact are not capable of being any way known but to the bystanders) you will do well to let it be known, for the ending of controversies, and banishing of error concerning any of those points, out of the world. For whatever may be known, besides matter of fact, is

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capable of demonstration; and when you have demonstrated to any one any point in religion, you shall have my consent to punish him if he do not assent to it. But yet let me tell you, there are many truths, even in mathematics, the evidence whereof one man seeing, is able to demonstrate to himself, and so may know them: which evidence yet he not being able to make another see, (which is to demonstrate to him) he cannot make known to him, though his scholar be willing, and with all his power applies himself to learn it.

But granting your supposition, "that the one true religion may be known by those who profess it to be the only true religion;" will it follow from hence, that because it is knowable to be the true religion, therefore the magistrate who professes it actually knows it to be so? Without which knowledge, upon your principles, he cannot use force to bring men to it. But if you are but at hand to assure him which is the true religion, for which he ought to use force, he is bound to believe you; and that will do as well as if he examined and knew himself, or perhaps better. For you seem not well satisfied with what the magistrates have lately done, without your leave, concerning religion in England. And I confess the easiest way to remove all difficulties in the case, is for you to be the magistrate's infallible guide in matters of religion. And therefore you do well here also to keep to your safe style, lest if your sense were clear and determined, it might be more exposed to exceptions; and therefore you tell us the true religion may be known by those who profess it. For not saying by some of those, or by all those, the error of what you say is not so easily observed, and requires the more trouble to come at: which I shall spare myself here, being satisfied that the magistrate, who has so full an employment of his thoughts in the cares of his government, has not an overplus of leisure to attain that knowledge which you require, and so usually contents himself with believing.

Your next supposition is, that "the one true religion may also be manifested to be such, by them, to others; so far, at least, as to oblige them to receive it, and

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leave them without excuse if they do not." That it can be manifested to some, so as to oblige, *i. e.* cause them to receive it, is evident, because it is received. But because this seems to be spoken more in reference to those who do not receive it, as appears by these following words of yours: "then it is altogether as plain, that it may be very reasonable and necessary for some men to change their religion; and that it may be made appear to them to be so. And then, if such men will not consider what is offered to convince them of the reasonableness and necessity of doing it, it may be very fit and reasonable," you tell me, "for any thing I have said to the contrary, in order to the bringing them to the consideration, to require them, under convenient penalties, to forsake their false religions, and embrace the true." You suppose the true religion may be so manifested by a man that is of it, to all men so far as to leave them, if they do not embrace it, without excuse. Without excuse, to whom I beseech you? To God, indeed, but not to the magistrate; who can never know whether it has been so manifested to any man, that it has been through his fault that he has not been convinced; and not through the fault of him to whom the magistrate committed the care of convincing him: and it is a sufficient excuse to the magistrate, for any one to say to him, I have not neglected to consider the arguments that have been offered me by those whom you have employed to manifest it to me; but that yours is the only true religion I am not convinced. Which is so direct and sufficient an excuse to the magistrate, that had he an express commission from heaven to punish all those who did not consider, he could not yet justly punish any one whom he could not convince had not considered. But you endeavour to avoid this, by what you infer from this supposition; viz. "That then it may be very fit and reasonable, for any thing I have said to the contrary, to require men, under convenient penalties, to forsake their false religions, to embrace the true, in order to the bringing them to consideration." Whether I have said any thing to the contrary or no, the readers must

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judge, and I need not repeat. But now, I say, it is neither just nor reasonable to require men, under penalties, to attain one end, in order to bring them to use the means not necessary to that, but to another end. For where is it you can say (unless you will return to your old supposition, of yours being the true religion; which you say is not necessary to your method) that men are by the law "required to forsake their false religions, and embrace the true?" The utmost is this, in all countries where the national religion is imposed by law, men are required, under the penalties of those laws, outwardly to conform to it; which you say is in order to make them consider. So that your punishments are for the attaining one end, viz. conformity, in order to make men use consideration, which is a means not necessary to that, but another end, viz. finding out and embracing the one true religion. For however consideration may be a necessary means to find and embrace the one true religion, it is not at all a necessary means to outward conformity in the communion of any religion.

To manifest the consistency and practicableness of your method to the question, what advantage would it be to the true religion, if magistrates did every where so punish? You answer, that "by the magistrate's punishing, if I speak to the purpose, I must mean their punishing men for rejecting the true religion, (so tendered to them, as has been said) in order to the bringing them to consider and embrace it. Now before we can suppose magistrates every where so to punish, we must suppose the true religion to be every where the national religion. And if this were the case, you think it is evident enough, what advantage to the true religion it would be, if magistrates every where did so punish. For then we might reasonably hope that all false religions would soon vanish, and the true become once more the only religion in the world: whereas, if magistrates should not so punish, it were much to be feared (especially considering what has already happened) that, on the contrary, false religions and atheism, as more agreeable to the soil, would daily take deeper root, and propagate themselves, till there were no room

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left for the true religion (which is but a foreign plant) in any corner of the world."

If you can make it practicable that the magistrate should punish men for rejecting the true religion, without judging which is the true religion,—or if true religion could appear in person, take the magistrate's seat, and there judge all that rejected her,—something might be done. But the mischief of it is, it is a man that must condemn, men must punish; and men cannot do this but by judging who is guilty of the crime which they punish. An oracle, or an interpreter of the law of nature, who speaks as clearly, tells the magistrate, he may and ought to punish those "who reject the true religion," tendered with sufficient evidence:" the magistrate is satisfied of his authority, and believes this commission to be good. Now I would know how possibly he can execute it, without making himself the judge first what is the true religion; unless the law of nature at the same time delivered into his hands the XXXIX Articles of the one only true religion, and another book wherein all the ceremonies and outward worship of it are contained. But it being certain, that the law of nature has not done this; and as certain, that the articles, ceremonies, and discipline of this one only true religion have been often varied in several ages and countries, since the magistrate's commission by the law of nature was first given: there is no remedy left, but that the magistrate must judge what is the true religion, if he must punish them who reject it. Suppose the magistrate be commissioned to punish those who depart from right reason; the magistrate can yet never punish any one, unless he be judge what is right reason; and then judging that murder, theft, adultery, narrow cart-wheels, or want of bows and arrows in a man's house, are against right reason, he may make laws to punish men guilty of those, as rejecting right reason.

So, if the magistrate in England or France, having a commission to punish those who reject the one only true religion, judges the religion of his national church to be it; it is possible for him to lay penalties on those who reject it, pursuant to that commission; otherwise, with-

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out judging that to be the one only true religion, it is wholly impracticable for him to punish those who embrace it not, as rejecters of the one only true religion.

To provide as good a salvo as the thing will bear, you say, in the following words, "Before we can suppose magistrates every where so to punish, we must suppose the true religion to be every where the national." That is true of actual punishment, but not of laying on penalties by law; for that would be to suppose the national religion makes or chooses the magistrate, and not the magistrate the national religion. But we see the contrary; for let the national religion be what it will before, the magistrate doth not always fall into it and embrace that; but if he thinks not that, but some other the true, the first opportunity he has he changes the national religion into that which he judges the true, and then punishes the dissenters from it; where his judgment, which is the true religion, always necessarily precedes, and is that which ultimately does, and must determine who are rejecters of the true religion, and so obnoxious to punishment. This being so, I would gladly see how your method can be any way practicable to the advantage of the true religion, whereof the magistrate every where must be judge, or else he can punish nobody at all.

You tell me that whereas I say, that to justify punishment it is requisite that it be directly useful for the procuring some greater good than that which it takes away; you "wish I had told you why it must needs be directly useful for that purpose." However exact you may be in demanding reasons of what is said, I thought here you had no cause to complain; but you let slip out of your memory the foregoing words of this passage, which together stands thus: "Punishment is some evil, some inconvenience, some suffering, by taking away or abridging some good thing, which he who is punished has otherwise a right to. Now, to justify the bringing any such evil upon any man, two things are requisite; 1. That he that does it has a commission so to do. 2. That it be directly useful for the promoting some greater good." It is evident by

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these words, that punishment brings direct evil upon a man, and therefore it should not be used but where it is directly useful for the procuring some greater good. In this case, the signification of the word directly, carries a manifest reason in it, to any one who understands what directly means. If the taking away any good from a man cannot be justified, but by making it a means to procure a greater; is it not plain it must be so a means as to have, in the operation of causes and effects, a natural tendency to that effect? And then it is called directly useful to such an end: and this may give you a reason "why punishment must be directly useful for that purpose." I know you are very tender of your indirect and at a distance usefulness of force, which I have in another place showed to be, in your way, only useful by accident; nor will the question you here subjoin excuse it from being so, viz. "Why penalties are not as directly useful for the bringing men to the true religion, as the rod of correction is to drive foolishness from a child, or to work wisdom in him?" Because the rod works on the will of the child, to obey the reason of the father, whilst under his tuition; and thereby makes it supple to the dictates of his own reason afterwards, and disposes him to obey the light of that, when being grown to be a man, that is to be his guide, and this is wisdom. If your penalties are so used, I have nothing to say to them.

Your way is charged to be impracticable to those ends you propose, which you endeavour to clear, p. 68. That there may be fair play on both sides, the reader shall have in the same view what we both say:

L. II. p. 125. "It remains now to examine, whether the author's argument will not hold good, even against punishments in your way. For if the magistrate's authority be, as you here say, only to procure all his subjects (mark what you say, *all his sub-*

L. III. p. 63. But how little to the purpose this request of yours is, will quickly appear. For if the magistrate provides sufficiently for the instruction of all his subjects in the true religion; and then re-

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jects) the means of discovering the way of salvation, and to procure withal, as much as in him lies; that *none* remain ignorant of it, or refuse to embrace it, either for want of using those means, or by reason of any such prejudices as may render them ineffectual. If this be the magistrate's business, in reference to *all his subjects;* I desire you, or any man else, to tell me how this can be done, by the application of force only to a part of them; unless you will still vainly suppose ignorance, negligence, or prejudice, only amongst that part which any where differs from the magistrate. If those of the magistrate's church may be ignorant of the way of salvation; if it be possible there may be amongst them those who refuse to embrace it, either for want of using those means, or by reason of any such prejudices as may render them ineffectual; what in this case becomes of the magistrate's authority to procure all his subjects the means of discovering the way of salvation? Must these of his subjects be neglected, and left without the means he has authority to procure them? Or must he use force upon them too? And then, pray show me how this can be quires them all, under convenient penalties, to hearken to the teachers and ministers of it, and to profess and exercise it with one accord, under their direction, in public assemblies: is there any pretence to say, that in so doing he applies force only to a part of his subjects, when the law is general, and excepts none? It is true the magistrate inflicts the penalties, in that case, only upon them that break the law. But is that the thing you mean by his "applying force only to a part of his subjects?" Would you have him punish all indifferently? them that obey the law, as well as them that do not?

As to ignorance, negligence, and prejudice, I desire you, or any man else, to tell me what better course can be taken to cure them, than that which I have mentioned. For if after all that God's ministers and the magistrate can do, some will still remain ignorant, negligent, or prejudiced, I do not take that to be

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done. Shall the magistrate punish those of his own religion, to procure them the means of discovering the way of salvation, and to procure, as much as in him lies, that they remain not ignorant of it, or refuse not to embrace it? These are such contradictions in practice, this is such condemnation of a man's own religion, as no one can expect from the magistrate; and I dare say you desire not of him. And yet this is that he must do, if his authority be to procure *all* his subjects the means of discovering the way to salvation. And if it be so needful, as you say it is, that he should use it, I am sure force cannot do that till it be applied wider, and punishment be laid upon more than you would have it. For, if the magistrate be by force to procure, as much as in him lies, that *none* remain ignorant of the way of salvation, must he not punish all those who are ignorant of the way of salvation? And pray tell me how is this any way practicable, but by supposing none in the national church ignorant, and all out of it ignorant, of the way of salvation? Which what is it, but to punish men barely for not being of the magistrate's religion; the very thing you deny he has authority to do? So that the magistrate having, by your own confession, no authority thus to use force; and it being otherwise impracticable for the procuring all his subjects the means of discovering the way of salvation; there is an end of force. And so force being laid aside, either as unlawful or impracticable, the author's argument holds good against force, even in your way of applying it."

any disparagement to it: for certainly that is a very extraordinary remedy, which infallibly cures all diseased persons to whom it is applied.

The backwardness and lusts that hinder an impartial examination, as you describe it, is general. The corruption of nature which hinders a real embracing the

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true religion, that also you tell us here is universal, I ask a remedy for these in your way. You say the law for conformity is general, excepts none. Very likely, none that do not conform; but punishes none who, conforming, do neither impartially examine nor really embrace the true religion. From whence I conclude there is no corruption of nature in those who are brought up or join in outward communion with the church of England. But as to ignorance, negligence, and prejudice, you say "you desire me, or any man else, to tell what better course can be taken to cure them, than that which you have mentioned." If your church can find no better way to cure ignorance and prejudice, and the negligence that is in men to examine matters of religion, and heartily embrace the true, than what is impracticable upon conformists; then, of all others, conformists are in the most deplorable state. But, as I remember, you have been told of a better way, which is, the discoursing with men seriously and friendly about matters in religion, by those whose profession is the care of souls; examining what they do understand, and where, either through laziness, prejudice, or difficulty, they do stick; and applying to their several diseases, proper cures; which it is as impossible to do by a general harangue, once or twice a week out of the pulpit, as to fit all men's feet with one shoe, or cure all men's ails with one, though very wholesome, diet-drink. To be thus "instant in season, and out of season," some men have thought a better way of cure, than a desire only to have men driven by the whip, either in your, or the magistrate's hand, into the sheepfold: where when they are once, whether they understand, or no, their minister's sermons; whether they are, or can be better for them or no; whether they are ignorant and hypocritical conformists, and in that way like to remain so, rather than to become knowing and sincere converts; some bishops have thought it not sufficiently inquired: but this nobody is to mention, for whoever does so, "makes himself an occasion to show his good-will to the clergy."

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This had not been said by me here, now I see how apt you are to be put out of temper with any thing of this kind, though it be in every serious man's mouth, had not you desired me to show you a better way than force, your way applied. And, to use your way of arguing, since bare preaching, as now used, it is plain, will not do, there is no other means left but this to deal with the corrupt nature of conformists; for miracles are now ceased, and penalties they are free from; therefore, by your way of concluding, no other being left, this of visiting at home, conferring and instructing, and admonishing men there, and the like means, proposed by the reverend author of the Pastoral Care, is necessary; and men, whose business is the care of souls, are obliged to use it: for you "cannot prove, that it cannot do some service," I think I need not say, "indirectly and at a distance." And if this be proper and sufficient to bring conformists, notwithstanding the corruption of their nature, "to examine impartially, and really embrace the truth that must save them;" it will remain to show why it may not do as well on non-conformists, whose, I imagine, is the common corruption of nature, to bring them to examine and embrace the truth that must save them? And though it be not so extraordinary a remedy as will infallibly cure all diseased persons, to whom it is applied: yet since the corruption of nature, which is the same disease, and hinders the "impartial examination, and hearty embracing the truth that must save them," is equally in both, conformists and non-conformists; it is reasonable to think it should in both have the same cure, let that be what it will.

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CHAPTER X.

Of the Necessity of Force, in Matters of Religion.

The true religion cannot prevail without force

You tell us "you do not ground the lawfulness of such force, as you take to be useful for the promoting the true religion, upon the bare usefulness of such force, but upon the necessity as well as usefulness of it; and therefore you declare it to be no fit means to be used, either for that purpose or any other, where it is not necessary as well as useful."

How useful force in the magistrate's hand, for bringing men to the true religion, is like to be, we have shown in the foregoing chapter, in answer to what you have said for it. So that it being proved not useful, it is impossible it should be necessary. However we will examine what you say to prove the necessity of it. The foundation you build on for its necessity we have in your Argument considered, p. 10; where having at large dilated on men's inconsiderateness in the choice of their religions, and their persisting in those they have once chosen, without due examination, you conclude thus: "Now if this be the case, if men are so averse to a due consideration, if they usually take up their religion without examining it as they ought, what other means is there left?" Wherein you suppose force necessary, instead of proving it to be so; for preaching and persuasion not prevailing upon all men, you upon your own authority think fit something else should be done; and that being resolved, you readily pitch on force, because you say you can find nothing else; which in effect is only to tell us, if the salvation of men's souls were only left to your discretion, how you would order the matter.

And in your answer to me, you very confidently tell us, "the true religion cannot prevail without the assistance either of miracles or of authority." I shall here

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only observe one or two things, and then go on to examine how you make this good.

The first thing I shall observe is, that in your Argument considered, &c. you suppose force necessary only to master the aversion there is in men to considering and examination: and here in your answer to me, you make force necessary to conquer the aversion there is in men to embrace and obey the true religion. Which are so very different, that the former justifies the use of force only to make men consider; the other justifies the use of force to make men embrace religion. If you meant the same thing when you writ your first treatise, it was not very ingenuous to express yourself in such words as were not proper to give your reader your true meaning; it being a far different thing to use force to make men consider, which is an action in their power to do or omit, and to use force to make them embrace, *i. e.* believe any religion, which is not a thing in any one's power to do or forbear as he pleases. If you say you meant barely considering in your first paper, as the whole current of it would make one believe; then I see your hypothesis may mend, as we have seen in other parts, and, in time, may grow to its full stature.

Another thing I shall remark to you is, that in your first paper, besides preaching and persuasion, and the grace of God, nothing but force was necessary. Here in your second, it is either miracles or authority, which how you make good, we will now consider.

You having said, you had no "reason from any experiment to expect that the true religion should be any way the gainer by toleration," I instanced in the prevailing of the Gospel, by its own beauty, force, and reasonableness, in the first ages of Christianity. You reply, that it has not the same beauty, force, and reasonableness now that it had then, unless "I include miracles too, which are now ceased; and, as you tell us, were not withdrawn, till by their help Christianity had prevailed to be received for the religion of the empire, and to be encouraged and supported by the laws of it."

If therefore we will believe you upon your own word,

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force being necessary, (for prove it necessary you never can) you have entered into the counsel of God, and tell us, when force could not be had, miracles were employed to supply its want: "I cannot but think, say you, it is highly probable (if we may be allowed to guess at the counsels of infinite wisdom) that God was pleased to continue them till then," *i. e.* till the laws of the empire supported Christianity, "not so much for any necessity there was of them all that time, for the evincing the truth of the Christian religion, as to supply the want of the magistrate's assistance." You allow yourself to guess very freely, when you will make God use miracles to supply a means he nowhere authorized or appointed. How long miracles continued we shall see anon.

Say you, "If we may be allowed to guess:" this modesty of yours, where you confess you guess, is only concerning the time of the continuing of miracles; but as to their supplying the want of coactive force, that you are positive in, both here and where you tell us, "Why penalties were not necessary at first, to make men to give ear to the Gospel, has already been shown;" and a little after, "the great and wonderful things which were to be done for the evidencing the truth of the Gospel, were abundantly sufficient to procure attention," &c. How you come to know so undoubtedly that miracles were made use of to supply the magistrate's authority, since God nowhere tells you so, you would have done well to show.

But in your opinion force was necessary, and that could not then be had, and so God must use miracles. For, say you, "Our Saviour was no magistrate, and therefore could not inflict political punishments upon any man; so much less could he empower his apostles to do it." Could not our Saviour empower his apostles to denounce or inflict punishments on careless or obstinate unbelievers, to make them hear and consider? You pronounce very boldly methinks of Christ's power, and set very narrow limits to what at another time you would not deny to be infinite: but it was convenient here for your present purpose, that it should be so limited.

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But, they not being magistrates, "he could not empower his apostles to inflict political punishments." How is it of a sudden, that they must be political punishments? You tell us all that is necessary, is to "lay briars and thorns in men's ways, to trouble and disease them to make them consider." This I hope our Saviour had power to do, if he had found it necessary, without the assistance of the magistrate; he could have always done by his apostles and ministers, if he had so thought fit, what he did once by St. Peter, have dropped thorns and briars into their very minds, that should have pricked, troubled, and diseased them sufficiently. But sometimes it is briars and thorns only that you want; sometimes it must be human means; and sometimes, as here, nothing will serve your turn but political punishments; just as will best suit your occasion, in the argument you have then before you.

That the apostles could lay on punishments, as troublesome and as great as any political ones when they were necessary, we see in Ananias and Sapphira: and he that had "all power given him in heaven and in earth" could, if he had thought fit, have laid briars and thorns in the way of all that received not his doctrine.

You add, "But as he could not punish men to make them hear him, so neither was there any need that he should. He came as a prophet sent from God to reveal a new doctrine to the world; and therefore, to prove his mission, he was to do such things as could only be done by a divine power: and the works which he did were abundantly sufficient both to gain him a hearing, and to oblige the world to receive his doctrine." Thus the want of force and punishments is supplied. How far? so far as they are supposed necessary to gain a hearing, and so far as to oblige the world to receive Christ's doctrine; whereby, as I suppose, you mean sufficient to lay an obligation on them to receive his doctrine, and render them inexcusable if they did not: but that they were not sufficient to make all that saw them effectually to receive and embrace the Gospel, I think is evident; and you will not I imagine

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say, that all who saw Christ's miracles believed on him. So that miracles were not to supply the want of such force, as was to be continued on men to make them consider as they ought, *i.e.* till they embraced the truth that must save them. For we have little reason to think that our Saviour, or his apostles, contended with their neglect or refusal by a constant train of miracles, continued on to those who were not wrought upon by the Gospel preached to them. St. Matthew tells us, chap. xiii. 58, that he did not many mighty works in his own country, because of their unbelief; much less were miracles to supply the want of force in that use you make of it, where you tell us it is to punish the fault of not being of the true religion: for we do not find any miraculously punished to bring them into the Gospel. So that the want of force to either of these purposes not being supplied by miracles, the Gospel it is plain subsisted and spread itself without force so made use of, and without miracles to supply the want of it; and therefore it so far remains true, that the Gospel having the same beauty, force, and reasonableness now as it had at the beginning, it wants not force to supply the defect of miracles, to that for which miracles were nowhere made use of. And so far, at least, the experiment is good, and this assertion true, that the Gospel is able to prevail by its own light and truth, without the continuance of force on the same person, or punishing men for not being of the true religion.

You say, "Our Saviour, being no magistrate, could not inflict political punishments; much less could he empower his apostles to do it." I know not what need there is, that it should be political; so there were so much punishment used, as you say is sufficient to make men consider, it is not necessary it should come from this or that hand: or if there be any odds in that, we should be apt to think it would come best, and most effectually, from those who preached the Gospel, and could tell them it was to make them consider; than from the magistrate, who neither doth, nor, according to your scheme, can, tell them it is to make them consider.

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And this power you will not deny but our Saviour could have given to the apostles.

But if there were such absolute need of political punishments, Titus or Trajan might as well have been converted as Constantine. For how true it is, that miracles supplied the want of force from those days till Constantine's, and then ceased, we shall see by and by. I say not this to enter boldly into the counsels of God, or to take upon me to censure the conduct of the Almighty, or to call his providence to an account; but to answer your saying, "Our Saviour was no magistrate, and therefore could not inflict political punishments." For he could have had both magistrates and political punishments at his service, if he had thought fit; and needed not to have continued miracles longer "than there was necessity for evincing the truth of the Christian religion, as you imagine, to supply the want of the magistrate's assistance, by force, which is necessary."

But how come you to know that force is necessary? Has God revealed it in his word? nowhere. Has it been revealed to you in particular? that you will not say. What reason have you for it? none at all but this, that having set down the grounds, upon which men take up and persist in their religion, you conclude, "what means is there left but force?" Force therefore you conclude necessary, because, without any authority, but from your own imagination, you are peremptory, that other means, besides preaching and persuasion, is to be used; and therefore it is necessary, because you can think of no other.

When I tell you there is other means, and that by your own confession the grace of God is another means, and therefore force is not necessary: you reply, "Though the grace of God be another means, and you thought fit to mention it, to prevent cavils; yet it is none of the means of which you were speaking, in the place I refer to; which any one who reads that paragraph will find to be only human means: and therefore, though the grace of God be both a proper and sufficient means, and such as can work by itself, and without which

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neither penalties nor any other means can do any thing; yet it may be true however, that when admonitions and entreaties fail, there is no human means left, but penalties, to bring prejudiced persons to hear and consider what may convince them of their errors, and discover the truth to them. And then penalties will be necessary in respect to that end as a human means."

In which words, if you mean an answer to my argument, it is this, that force is necessary, because to bring men into the right way there is other human means necessary, besides admonitions and persuasions. For else what have we to do with human in the case? But it is no small advantage one owes to logic, that where sense and reason fall short, a distinction ready at hand may eke it out. Force, when persuasions will not prevail, is necessary, say you, because it is the only means left. When you are told it is not the only means left, and so cannot be necessary on that account: you reply, that "when admonitions and entreaties fail, there is no human means left, but penalties, to bring prejudiced persons to hear and consider what may convince them of their errors, and discover the truth to them: and then penalties will be necessary in respect to that end, as a human means."

Suppose it be urged to you, when your moderate lower penalties fail, there is no human means left but dragooning and such other severities, which you say you condemn as much as I, "to bring prejudiced persons to hear and consider what may convince them of their errors, and discover the truth to them;" and then dragooning, imprisonment, scourging, fining, &c. will be necessary in respect to that end, as a human means; what can you say but this? that you are empowered to judge what degrees of human means are necessary, but others are not. For without such a confidence in your own judgment, where God has neither said how much, nor that any force is necessary; I think this is as good an argument for the highest, as yours is for the lower penalties. When "admonitions and entreaties will not prevail, then penalties, lower penalties, some degrees of force will be necessary, say you, as a human means."

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And when your lower penalties, your some degrees of force, will not prevail, then higher degrees will be necessary, say I, as a human means. And my reason is the same with yours, because there is no other means, *i. e.* human means, left. Show me how your argument concludes for lower punishments being necessary, and mine not for higher, even to dragooning, "et eris mihi magnus Apollo."

But let us apply this to your succedaneum of miracles, and then it will be much more admirable. You tell us, admonitions and entreaties not prevailing to bring men into the right way, "force is necessary, because there is no other means left." To that it is said, yes, there is other means left, the grace of God. Ay, but, say you, that will not do; because you speak only of human means. So that, according to your way of arguing, some other human means is necessary: for you yourself tell us, that the means you were speaking of, where you say, "that when admonitions and entreaties will not do, what other means is there left but force? were human means." Your words are, "which any one, who reads that paragraph, will find to be only human means." By this argument, then, other human means are necessary besides preaching and persuasion, and those human means you have found out to be either force or miracles: the latter are certainly notable human means. And your distinction of human means serves you to very good purpose, having brought miracles to be one of your human means. Preaching and admonitions, say you, are not sufficient to bring men into the right way; something else is necessary: yes, the grace of God; no, say you, that will not do, it is not human means: it is necessary to have other human means; therefore, in the three or four first centuries after Christianity, the insufficiency of preaching and admonitions was made up with miracles, and thus the necessity of other human means is made good. But to consider a little farther your miracles as supplying the want of force.

The question between us here is, whether the Christian religion did not prevail, in the first ages of the

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church, by its own beauty, force, and reasonableness, without the assistance of force? I say it did, and therefore external force is not necessary. To this you reply, "that it cannot prevail by its own light and strength, without the assistance either of miracles, or of authority; and therefore the Christian religion not being still accompanied with miracles, force is now necessary." So that, to make your equivalent of miracles correspond with your necessary means of force, you seem to require an actual application of miracles, or of force, to prevail with men to receive the Gospel; *i. e.* men could not be prevailed with to receive the Gospel without actually seeing of miracles. For when you tell us, that "you are sure I cannot say the Christian religion is still accompanied with miracles, as it was at its first planting," I hope you do not mean that the Gospel is not still accompanied with an undoubted testimony that miracles were done by the first publishers of it; which was as much of miracles, as I suppose the greatest part of those had, with whom the Christian religion prevailed, till it was "supported and encouraged, as you tell us, by the laws of the empire:" for I think you will not say, or if you should, you could not expect to be believed, that all, or the greatest part of those, that embraced the Christian religion, before it was supported by the laws of the empire, which was not till the fourth century, had actually miracles done before them, to work upon them. And all those, who were not eye-witnesses of miracles done in their presence, it is plain had no other miracles than we have; that is, upon report; and it is probable not so many, nor so well attested, as we have. The greatest part then, of those who were converted, at least, in some of those ages, before Christianity was supported by the laws of the empire, I think you must allow, were wrought upon by bare preaching, and such miracles as we still have, miracles at a distance, related miracles. In others, and those the greatest number, prejudice was not so removed, that they were prevailed on to consider, to consider as they ought, *i. e.* in your language, to consider so as to embrace. If they had not so considered in our days, what, according to your scheme, must have been done to them, that did not

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consider as they ought? Force must have been applied to them. What therefore in the primitive church was to be done to them? Why! your succedaneum miracles, actual miracles, such as you deny the Christian religion to be still accompanied with, must have been done in their presence, to work upon them. Will you say this was so, and make a new church-history for us, and outdo those writers who have been thought pretty liberal of miracles? If you do not, you must confess miracles supplied not the place of force; and so let fall all your fine contrivance about the necessity either of force or miracles; and perhaps you will think it at last a more becoming modesty, not to set the divine power and providence on work by rules, and for the ends of your hypothesis, without having any thing in authentic history, much less in divine and unerring revelation, to justify you. But force and power deserve something more than ordinary and allowable arts or arguments, to get and keep them: "si violandum sit jus, regnandi causâ violandum est."

If the testimony of miracles having been done were sufficient to make the Gospel prevail, without force, on those who were not eye-witnesses of them; we have that still, and so upon that account need not force to supply the want of it; but if truth must have either the law of the country, or actual miracles to support it, what became of it after the reign of Constantine the Great, under all those emperors that were erroneous or heretical? It supported itself in Piedmont, and France, and Turkey, many ages without force or miracles: and it spread itself in divers nations and kingdoms of the north and east, without any force, or other miracles than those that were done many ages before. So that I think you will, upon second thoughts, not deny, but that the true religion is able to prevail now, as it did at first, and has done since in many places, without assistance from the powers in being; by its own beauty, force, and reasonableness, whereof well-attested miracles are a part.

But the account you give us of miracles will deserve to be a little examined. We have it in these words: "Considering that those extraordinary means were not

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withdrawn till by their help Christianity had prevailed to be received for the religion of the empire, and to be supported and encouraged by the laws of it; you cannot, you say, but think it highly probable, (if we may be allowed to guess at the counsels of infinite wisdom) that God was pleased to continue them till then; not so much for any necessity there was of them all that while, for the evincing the truth of the Christian religion, as to supply the want of the magistrate's assistance." Miracles then, if what you say be true, were continued till "Christianity was received for the religion of the empire, not so much to evince the truth of the Christian religion, as to supply the want of the magistrate's assistance." But in this the learned author, whose testimony you quote, fails you. For he tells you that the chief use of miracles in the church, after the truth of the Christian religion had been sufficiently confirmed by them in the world, was to oppose the false and pretended miracles of heretics and heathens; and answerable hereunto miracles ceased and returned again, as such oppositions made them more or less necessary. Accordingly miracles, which before had abated, in Trajan's and Hadrian's time, which was in the latter end of the first, or beginning of the second century, did again revive to confound the magical delusions of the heretics of that time. And in the third century the heretics using no such tricks, and the faith being confirmed, they by degrees ceased, of which there then, he says, could be no imaginable necessity. His words are, "Et quidem eo minus necessaria sunt pro veterum principiis recentiora illa miracula, quod hæreticos, quos appellant, nullos adversarios habeant, qui contraria illis dogmata astruant miraculis. Sic enim vidimus, apud veteres, dum nulli ecclesiam exercerent adversarii, seu hæretici, seu Gentiles; aut satis illi præteritis miraculis fuissent refutati; aut nullas ipsi præstigias opponerent quæ veris essent miraculis oppugnandæ; subductam deinde paulatim esse mirificam illam spiritûs virtutem. Ortos sub Trajano Hadrianoque hæreticos ostendimus præstigiis magicis fuisse usos, et proinde miraculorum verorum in ecclesiâ usum una *revixisse*. Ne dicam præ-

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stigiatores etiam Gentiles eodem illo seculo sane frequentissimos, Apuleium in Africâ, in Asiâ Alexandrum Pseudomantim, multosque alios quorum meminit Aristides. Tertio seculo orto, hæretici Hermogenes, Praxeas, Noetus, Theodotus, Sabellius, Novatianus, Artemas, Samosatenus, nulla, ut videtur, miracula ipsi venditabant, nullis propterea miraculis oppugnandi. Inde vidimus, apud ipsos etiam catholicos, sensim defecisse miracula. Et quidem, hæreticis nulla in contrarium miracula ostentantibus, quæ tandem fingi potest miraculorum necessitas traditam ab initio fidem, miraculisque adeo jamdudum confirmatam prædicantibus? Nulla certe prorsus pro primævo miraculorum exemplo. Nulla denique consciis vere primævam esse fidem quam novis miraculis suscipiunt confirmandam." Dodwell, Dissertat. in Iræn. Diss. II. Sect. 65.

The history therefore you have from him, of miracles, serves for his hypothesis, but not at all for yours. For if they were continued to supply the want of force, which was to deal with the corruption of depraved human nature; that being, without any great variation in the world, constantly the same, there could be no reason why they should abate and fail, and then return and revive again. So that there being then, as you suppose, no necessity of miracles for any other end, but to supply the want of the magistrate's assistance; they must, to suit that end, be constant and regularly the same as you would have force to be, which is steadily and uninterruptedly to be applied, as a constantly necessary remedy, to the corrupt nature of mankind.

If you allow the learned Dodwell's reasons for the continuation of miracles, till the fourth century, your hypothesis, that they were continued to supply the magistrate's assistance, will be only precarious. For if there was need of miracles till that time to other purposes, the continuation of them in the church, though you could prove them to be as frequent and certain as those of our Saviour and the apostles, it would not advantage your cause; since it would be no evidence, that they were used for that end, which as long as there were other visible uses of them, you could not,

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without revelation, assure us were made use of by Divine Providence "to supply the want of the magistrate's assistance." You must therefore confute his hypothesis, before you can make any advantage of what he says, concerning the continuation of miracles, for the establishing of yours. For till you can show, that that which he assigns was not the end, for which they were continued in the church; the utmost you can say is, that it may be imagined, that one reason of their continuation was to supply the want of the magistrate's assistance: but what you can without proof imagine possible, I hope you do not expect should be received as an unquestionable proof that it was so. I can imagine it possible they were not continued for that end, and one imagination will be as good a proof as another.

To do your modesty right therefore, I must allow, that you do faintly offer at some kind of reason, to prove that miracles were continued to supply the want of the magistrate's assistance: and since God has nowhere declared that it was for that end, you would persuade us, in, this paragraph, that it was so, by two reasons. One is, that the truth of the Christian religion being sufficiently evinced by the miracles done by our Saviour and his apostles, and perhaps their immediate successors; there was no other need of miracles to be continued till the fourth century; and therefore they were used by God to supply the want of the magistrate's assistance. This I take to be the meaning of these words of yours, "I cannot but think it highly probable that God was pleased to continue them till then; not so much for any necessity there was of them all that while for the evincing the truth of the Christian religion, as to supply the want of the magistrate's assistance." Whereby, I suppose, you do not barely intend to tell the world what is your opinion in the case; but use this as an argument, to make it probable to others, that this was the end for which miracles were continued; which at the best will be but a very doubtful probability to build such a bold assertion on, as this of yours is, viz.

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That "the Christian religion is not able to subsist and prevail in the world, by its own light and strength, without the assistance either of force or actual miracles." And therefore you must either produce a declaration from Heaven that authorizes you to say, that miracles were used to supply the want of force, or show that there was no other use of them but this. For if any other use can be assigned of them, as long as they continued in the church, one may safely deny, that they were to supply the want of force: and it will lie upon you to prove it by some other way than by saying you think it highly probable. For I suppose you do not expect that your thinking any thing highly probable, should be a sufficient reason for others to acquiesce in, when perhaps, the history of miracles considered, nobody could bring himself to say he thought it probable, but one whose hypothesis stood in need of such a poor support.

The other reason you seem to build on is this, that when Christianity was received for the religion of the empire, miracles ceased, because there was then no longer any need of them; which I take to be the argument insinuated in these words, "Considering that those extraordinary means were not withdrawn till by their help Christianity had prevailed to be received for the religion of the empire." If then you can make it appear that miracles lasted till Christianity was received for the religion of the empire, without any other reason for their continuation, but to supply the want of the magistrate's assistance; and that they ceased as soon as the magistrates became Christians; your argument will have some kind of probability, that within the Roman empire this was the method God used for the propagating the Christian religion. But it will not serve to make good your position, "that the Christian religion cannot subsist and prevail by its own strength and light, without the assistance of miracles or authority," unless you can show, that God made use of miracles to introduce and support it in other parts of the world, not subject to the Roman empire, till the magistrates there also became Christians. For the corruption of nature

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being the same without, as within the bounds of the Roman empire; miracles, upon your hypothesis, were as necessary to supply the want of the magistrate's assistance in other countries as in the Roman empire. For I do not think you will find the civil sovereigns were the first converted in all those countries, where the Christian religion was planted after Constantine's reign: and in all those it will be necessary for you to show us the assistance of miracles.

But let us see how much your hypothesis is favoured by church history. If the writings of the fathers of greatest name and credit are to be believed, miracles were not withdrawn when Christianity had prevailed to be received for the religion of the empire. Athanasius, the great defender of the catholic orthodoxy, writ the life of his contemporary St. Anthony, full of miracles; which though some have questioned, yet the learned Dodwell allows to be writ by Athanasius: and the style evinces it to be his, which is also confirmed by other ecclesiastical writers.

Palladius tells us, "That Ammon did many miracles: but that particularly St. Athanasius related in the life of Anthony, that Ammon going with some monks Anthony had sent to him, when they came to the river Lycus, which they were to pass, was afraid to strip for fear of seeing himself naked; and whilst he was in dispute of this matter, he was taken up, and in an ecstasy carried over by an angel, the rest of the monks swimming the river. When he came to Anthony, Anthony told him he had sent for him, because God had revealed many things to him concerning him, and particularly his translation. And when Ammon died in his retirement, Anthony saw his soul carried into heaven by angels." *Palladius in Vita Ammonis.*

Socrates tells us, "That Anthony saw the soul of Ammon taken up by angels, as Athanasius writes in the life of Anthony."

And again, says he, "It seems superfluous for me to relate the many miracles Anthony did; how he fought

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openly with devils, discovering all their tricks and cheats: for Athanasius bishop of Alexandria has prevented me on that subject, having writ a book particularly of his life."

"Anthony was thought worthy of the vision of God, and led a life perfectly conformable to the laws of Christ. This, whoever reads the book, wherein is contained the history of his life, will easily know; wherein he will also see prophecy shining out: for he prophesied very clearly of those who were infected with the Arian contagion, and foretold what mischief from them was threatened to the churches; God truly revealing all these things to him, which is certainly the principal evidence of the catholic faith, no such man being to be found amongst the heretics. But do not take this upon my word, but read and study the book itself."

This account you have from St. Chrysostom *, whom Mr. Dodwell calls the contemner of fables.

St. Hierom, in his treatise De Viro Perfecto, speaks of the frequency of miracles done in his time, as a thing past question: besides those, not a few, which he has left upon record, in the lives of Hilarion and Paul, two monks, whose lives he has writ. And he that has a mind to see the plenty of miracles of this kind, need but read the collection of the lives of the fathers, made by Rosweydus.

Ruffin tells us, that Athanasius lodged the bones of St. John Baptist in the wall of the church, knowing by the spirit of prophecy the good they were to do to the next generation: and of what efficacy and use they were, may be concluded from the church with the golden roof, built to them soon after, in the place of the temple of Serapis.

St. Austin tells us †, "That he knew a blind man restored to sight by the bodies of the Milan martyrs, and some other such things; of which kind there were

* Chrysost. Hom. 8. in Matth. ii.

† Cœcum illuminatum fuisse jam noveram. Nec ea quæ cognoscimus, enumerare possumus. Aug. Retract. lib. 1. c. 13.

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so many done in that time, that many escaped his knowledge; and those which he knew were more than he could number." More of this you may see Epist. 137.

He further assures us, that by the single relics of St. Stephen "a blind woman received her sight. Lucullus was cured of an old fistula; Eucharius of the stone; three gouty men recovered; a lad killed with a cart-wheel going over him, restored to life safe and sound, as if he had received no hurt: a nun lying at the point of death, they sent her coat to the shrine, but she dying before it was brought back, was restored to life by its being laid on her dead body. The like happened at Hippo to the daughter of Bassus; and two others," whose names he sets down, were by the same relics raised from the dead.

After these and other particulars there set down, of miracles done in his time by those relics of St. Stephen, the holy father goes on thus: "What shall I do? pressed by my promise of despatching this work, I cannot here set down all: and without doubt many, when they shall read this, will be troubled that I have omitted so many particles, which they truly know as well as I *. For if I should, passing by the rest, write only the miraculous cures which have been wrought by this most glorious martyr, Stephen, in the colony of Calama, and this of ours, I should fill many books, and yet should not take in all of them: but only those of which there are collections published †, which are read to the people: for this I took care should be done, when I saw that signs of divine power, like those of old, were *frequent* also in our times ‡. It is not now two years since that shrine has been at Hippo: and many of the books, which I certainly knew to be so, not being published, those which are published concerning those miraculous operations amounted to near

* Quæ utique mecum sciunt.

† Libelli dati sunt.

‡ Cum viderimus antiquis similia divinarum signa virtutum etiam nostris temporibus frequentari. Aug. de Civ. Dei, lib. xxii. c. 8.

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fifty when I writ this. But at Calama, where this shrine was before, there are more published, and their number is incomparably greater. At Uzal also a colony, and near Utica, we know many famous things to have been done by the same martyr."

Two of those books he mentions are printed in the appendix of the tenth tome of St. Austin's works of Plantin's edit. One of them contains two miracles; the other, as I remember, about seventeen. So that at Hippo alone, in two years' time, we may count, besides those omitted, there were published above 600 miracles, and, as he says, incomparably more at Calama: besides what were done by other relics of the same St. Stephen, in other parts of the world, which cannot be supposed to have had less virtue than those sent to this part of Africa. For the relics of St. Stephen, discovered by the dream of a monk, were divided and sent into distant countries, and there distributed to several churches.

These may suffice to show, that if the fathers of the church of greatest name and authority are to be believed, miracles were not withdrawn, but continued down to the latter end of the fourth century, long after "Christianity had prevailed to be received for the religion of the empire."

But if these testimonies of Athanasius, Chrysostom, Palladius, Ruffin, St. Hierom, and St. Austin, will not serve your turn, you may find much more to this purpose in the same authors; and, if you please, you may consult also St. Basil, Gregory Nazianzen, Gregory Nyssen, St. Ambrose, St. Hilary, Theodoret, and others.

This being so, you must either deny the authority of these fathers, or grant that miracles continued in the church after "Christianity was received for the religion of the empire: and then they could not be to supply the want of the magistrate's assistance," unless they were to supply the want of what was not wanting; and therefore they were continued for some other end. Which end of the continuation of miracles, when you are so far instructed in as to be able to assure us, that it was different from that for which God made use of them in

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the second and third centuries; when you are so far admitted into the secrets of Divine Providence as to be able to convince the world that the miracles between the apostles' and Constantine's time, or any other period you shall pitch on, were to supply the want of the magistrate's assistance, and those after, for some other purpose, what you say may deserve to be considered. Until you do this, you will only show the liberty you take to assert with great confidence, though without any ground, whatever will suit your system; and that you do not stick to make bold with the counsels of infinite wisdom, to make them subservient to your hypothesis.

And so I leave you to dispose of the credit of ecclesiastical writers as you shall think fit; and by your authority to establish or invalidate theirs as you please. But this, I think, is evident, that he who will build his faith or reasonings upon miracles delivered by church-historians, will find cause to go no farther than the apostles' time, or else not to stop at Constantine's: since the writers after that period, whose word we readily take as unquestionable in other things, speak of miracles in their time with no less assurance than the fathers before the fourth century; and a great part of the miracles of the second and third centuries stand upon the credit of the writers of the fourth. So that that sort of argument which takes and rejects the testimony of the ancients at pleasure, as may best suit with it, will not have much force with those who are not disposed to embrace the hypothesis, without any arguments at all.

You grant, "That the true religion has always light and strength of its own, *i. e.* without the assistance of force or miracles, sufficient to prevail with all that considered it seriously, and without prejudice: that therefore, for which the assistance of force is wanting, is to make men consider seriously, and without prejudice." Now, whether the miracles that we have still, miracles done by Christ and his apostles, attested, as they are, by undeniable history, be not fitter to deal with men's prejudices than force, and than force which requires

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nothing but outward conformity, I leave the world to judge. All the assistance the true religion needs from authority is only a liberty for it to be truly taught; but it has seldom had that, from the powers in being, in its first entry into their dominions, since the withdrawing of miracles: and yet I desire you to tell me, into what country the Gospel, accompanied, as now it is, only with past miracles, hath been brought by the preaching of men, who have laboured in it after the example of the apostles, where it did not so prevail over men's prejudices, that "as many as were ordained to eternal life," considered and believed it. Which, as you may see, Acts xiii. 48, was all the advance it made, even when assisted with the gift of miracles: for neither then were all, or the majority, wrought on to consider and embrace it.

But yet the Gospel "cannot prevail by its own light and strength;" and therefore miracles were to supply the place of force. How was force used? A law being made, there was a continued application of punishment to all those whom it brought not to embrace the doctrine proposed. Were miracles so used till force took place? For this we shall want more new church-history, and I think contrary to what we read in that part of it which is unquestionable; I mean in the Acts of the Apostles, where we shall find, that the then promulgators of the Gospel, when they had preached, and done what miracles the Spirit of God directed, if they prevailed not, they often left them; "Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said it was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing you put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy, we turn to the Gentiles," Acts xiii. 46. "They shook off the dust of their feet against them, and came unto Iconium," Acts xiii. 51. "But when divers were hardened, and believed not, but spake evil of that way before the multitude, he departed from them, and separated the disciples," Acts xix. 9. "Paul was pressed in spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus was Christ; and when they opposed themselves, and blas-

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phemed, he shook his raiment, and said unto them, Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles," Acts xviii. 6. Did the Christian magistrates ever do so, who thought it necessary to support the Christian religion by laws? Did they ever, when they had a while punished those whom persuasions and preaching had not prevailed on, give off, and leave them to themselves, and make trial of their punishment upon others? Or is this your way of force and punishment? If it be not, yours is not what miracles came to supply the room of, and so is not necessary. For you tell us, they are punished to make them consider, and they can never be supposed to consider "as they ought, whilst they persist in rejecting;" and therefore they are justly punished to make them so consider: so that not so considering, being the fault for which they are punished, and the amendment of that fault the end which is designed to be attained by punishing, the punishment must continue. But men were not always beat upon with miracles. To this, perhaps, you will reply, that the seeing of a miracle or two, or half a dozen, was sufficient to procure a hearing; but that being punished once or twice, or half a dozen times, is not; for you tell us, "the power of miracles communicated to the apostles served altogether as well as punishment, to procure them a hearing:" where, if you mean by hearing, only attention, who doubts but punishment may also procure that? If you mean by hearing, receiving and embracing what is proposed, that even miracles themselves did not effect upon all eye-witnesses. Why then, I beseech you, if one be to supply the place of the other, is one to be continued on those who do reject; when the other was never long continued, nor, as I think we may safely say, often repeated to those who persisted in their former persuasions?

After all, therefore, may not one justly doubt, whether miracles supplied the place of punishment? nay, whether you yourself, if you be true to your own principles, can think so? You tell us, that not to join "themselves to the true church, where sufficient evi-

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dence is offered to convince men that it is so, is a fault that it cannot be unjust to punish." Let me ask you now, did the apostles, by their preaching and miracles, offer sufficient evidence to convince men that the church of Christ was the true church; or, which is, in this case, the same thing, that the doctrine they preached was the true religion? If they did, were not those who persisted in unbelief guilty of a fault? And if some of the miracles done in those days should now be repeated, and yet men should not embrace the doctrine, or join themselves to the church which those miracles accompanied; would you not think them guilty of a fault which the magistrate might justly, nay ought to punish? If you would answer truly and sincerely to this question, I doubt you would think your beloved punishments necessary, notwithstanding miracles, "there being no other human means left." I do not make this judgment of you from any ill opinion I have of your good-nature; but it is consonant to your principles: for if not professing the true religion, where sufficient evidence is offered by bare preaching, be a fault, and a fault justly to be punished by the magistrate; you will certainly think it much more his duty to punish a greater fault, as you must allow it is, to reject truth proposed with arguments and miracles, than with bare arguments: since you tell us, that the magistrate is "obliged to procure, as much as in him lies, that every man take care of his own soul, *i. e.* consider as he ought; which no man can be supposed to do, whilst he persists in rejecting:" as you tell us, p. 24.

Miracles, say you, supplied the want of force, "till by their help Christianity had prevailed to be received for the religion of the empire." Not that the magistrates had not as much commission then, from the law of nature, to use force for promoting the true religion, as since; but because the magistrates then, not being of the true religion, did not afford it the assistance of their political power. If this be so, and there be a necessity either of force or miracles, will there not be the same reason for miracles ever since, even to this day, and so on to the end of the world, in all those

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countries where the magistrate is not of the true religion? "Unless, as you urge it, you will say (what without impiety cannot be said) that the wise and benign Disposer of all things has not furnished mankind with competent means for the promoting his own honour in the world, and the good of souls."

But to put an end to your pretence to miracles, as supplying the place of force; let me ask you, whether, since the withdrawing of miracles, your moderate degree of force has been made use of for the support of the Christian religion? If not, then miracles were not made use of to supply the want of force, unless it were for the supply of such force as Christianity never had, which is for the supply of just no force at all; or else for the supply of the severities which have been in use amongst Christians, which is worse than none at all. Force, you say, is necessary: what force? "not fire and sword, not loss of estates, not maiming with corporal punishments, not starving and tormenting in noisome prisons:" those you condemn. "Not compulsion: these severities," you say, "are apter to hinder than promote the true religion; but moderate lower penalties, tolerable inconveniencies, such as should a little disturb and disease men." This assistance not being to be had from the magistrates, in the first ages of Christianity, miracles, say you, were continued till "Christianity became the religion of the empire, not so much for any necessity there was of them, all that while, for the evincing the truth of the Christian religion, as to supply the want of the magistrate's assistance. For the true religion not being able to support itself by its own light and strength, without the assistance either of miracles, or of authority," there was a necessity of the one or the other; and therefore, whilst the powers in being assisted not with necessary force, miracles supplied that want. Miracles then being to supply necessary force, and necessary force being only "lower moderate penalties, some inconveniencies, such as only disturb and disease a little;" if you cannot show that in all countries, where the magistrates have been Christian, they have assisted with

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such force, it is plain that miracles supplied not the want of necessary force; unless to supply the want of your necessary force, for a time, were to supply the want of an assistance, which true religion had not upon the withdrawing of miracles; and, I think I may say, was never thought on by any authority, in any age or country, till you now, above thirteen hundred years after, made this happy discovery. Nay, sir, since the true religion, as you tell us, cannot prevail or subsist without miracles or authority, *i. e.* your moderate force, it must necessarily follow, that the Christian religion has, in all ages and countries, been accompanied either with actual miracles, or such force: which, whether it be so or no, I leave you and all sober men to consider. When you can show that it has been so, we shall have reason to be satisfied with your bold assertion, that the Christian religion, as delivered in the New Testament, cannot "prevail by its own light and strength, without the assistance" of your moderate penalties, or of actual miracles accompanying it. But if ever since the withdrawing of miracles in all Christian countries, where force has been thought necessary by the magistrate to support the national, or, as every where it is called, the true religion; those severities have been made use of, which you, for a good reason, "condemn as apter to hinder than promote the true religion;" it is plain that miracles supplied the want of such an assistance from the magistrate, as was apter to hinder than promote the true religion. And your substituting of miracles, to supply the want of moderate force, will show nothing, for your cause, but the zeal of a man so fond of force, that he will, without any warrant from Scripture, enter into the counsels of the Almighty; and without authority from history talk of miracles, and political administrations, as may best suit his system.

To my saying, a religion that is from God wants not the assistance of human authority to make it prevail; you answer, "This is not simply nor always true. Indeed, when God takes the matter wholly into his own hands, as he does at his first revealing any religion, there can be no need of any assistance of human

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authority; but when God has once sufficiently settled his religion in the world, so that if men from thenceforth will do what they may and ought, in their several capacities, to preserve and propagate it, it may subsist and prevail without that extraordinary assistance from him, which was necessary for its first establishment." By this rule of yours, how long was there need of miracles to make Christianity subsist and prevail? If you will keep to it, you will find there was no need of miracles, after the promulgation of the Gospel by Christ and his apostles; for I ask you, was it not then so "sufficiently settled in the world, that if men would from thenceforth have done what they might and ought, in their several capacities," it would have subsisted and prevailed without that extraordinary assistance of miracles? unless you will on this occasion retract what you say in other places, viz. that it is a fault not to receive the "true religion, where sufficient evidence is offered to convince men that it is so." If then, from the times of the apostles, the Christian religion has had sufficient evidence that it is the true religion, and men did their duty, *i. e.* receive it; it would certainly have subsisted and prevailed, even from the apostles' times, without that extraordinary assistance; and then miracles after that were not necessary.

But perhaps you will say, that by men in their several capacities, you mean the magistrates. A pretty way of speaking, proper to you alone: but, even in that sense, it will not serve your turn. For then there will be need of miracles, not only in the time you propose, but in all times after. For if the magistrate, who is as much subject as other men to that corruption of human nature, by which you tell us false religions prevail against the true, should not do what he may and ought, so as to be of the true religion, as it is the odds he will not; what then will become of the true religion, which, according to you, cannot subsist or prevail without either the assistance of miracles or authority? Subjects cannot have the assistance of authority, where the magistrate is not of the true religion; and the magistrate wanting the assistance of authority to bring him to the true religion,

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that want must be still supplied with miracles, or else, according to your hypothesis, all must go to wreck; and the true religion, that cannot subsist by its own strength and light, must be lost in the world. For I presume you are scarce yet such an adorer of the powers of the world as to say, that magistrates are privileged from that common corruption of mankind, whose opposition to the true religion you suppose cannot be overcome without the assistance of miracles or force. The flock will stray, unless the bell-wether conduct them right; the bell-wether himself will stray, unless the shepherd's crook and staff, which he has as much need of as any sheep of the flock, keep him right: *ergo*, the whole flock will stray, unless the bell-wether have that assistance which is necessary to conduct him right. The case is the same here. So that, by your own rule, either there was no need of miracles to supply the want of force, after the apostles' time, or there is need of them still.

But your answer, when looked into, has something in it more excellent. I say, a religion that is of God wants not the assistance of human authority to make it prevail. You answer, "True, when God takes the matter into his own hands. But when once he has sufficiently settled religion, so that if men will but do what they may and ought, it may subsist without that extraordinary assistance from heaven; then he leaves it to their care." Where you suppose, if men will do their duties in their several capacities, true religion, being once established, may subsist without miracles. And is it not as true, that if they will, in their several capacities, do what they may and ought, true religion will also subsist without force? But you are sure magistrates will do what they may and ought, to preserve and propagate the true religion, but subjects will not. If you are not, you must bethink yourself how to answer that old question,

——"Sed quis custodiet ipsos
Custodes?"——

To my having said, that prevailing without the assistance of force, I thought was made use of as an argu-

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ment for the truth of the Christian religion: you reply, that you hope "I am mistaken: for sure this is a very bad argument, That the Christian religion, so contrary in the nature of it, as well to flesh and blood, as to the powers of darkness, should prevail as it did, and that not only without any assistance from authority, but even in spite of all the opposition which authority and a wicked world, joined with those infernal powers, could make against it. This, I acknowledge, has deservedly been insisted upon by Christians, as a very good proof of their religion. But to argue the truth of the Christian religion, from its mere prevailing in the world, without any aid from force, or the assistance of the powers in being; as if whatever religion should so prevail must needs be the true religion; whatever may be intended, is really not to defend the Christian religion, but to betray it." How you have mended the argument by putting in "mere," which is not any where used by me, I will not examine. The question is, whether the Christian religion, such as it was then (for I know not any other Christian religion), and is still, "contrary to flesh and blood, and to the powers of darkness," prevailed not without the assistance of human force, by those aids it has still? This, I think, you will not deny to be an argument used for its truth by Christians, and some of our church. How far any one in the use of this argument pleases or displeases you, I am not concerned. All the use I made of it was to show, that it is confessed that the Christian religion did prevail, without that human means of the coactive power of the magistrate, which you affirmed to be necessary; and this, I think, makes good the experiment I brought. Nor will your seeking, your way, a refuge in miracles, help you to evade it; as I have already shown.

But you give a reason for what you say, in these following words: "For neither does the true religion always prevail without the assistance of the powers in being, nor is that always the true religion which does so spread and prevail." Those who use the argument of its prevailing without force, for the truth of

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the Christian religion, it is like will tell you, that, if it be true, as you say, that the Christian religion, which at other times does, sometimes does not, prevail without the assistance of the powers in being; it is, because when it fails, it wants the due assistance and diligence of the ministers of it: "How shall they hear without a preacher?" How shall the Gospel be spread and prevail, if those who take on them to be the ministers and preachers of it either neglect to teach it others as they ought, or confirm it not by their lives? If, therefore, you will make this argument of any use to you, you must show where it was, that the ministers of the Gospel, doing their duty by the purity of their lives, and their uninterrupted labour, in being instant in season, and out of season, have not been able to make it prevail. An instance of this, it is believed, you will scarce find: and if this be the case, that it fails not to prevail where those, whose charge it is, neglect not to teach and spread it with that care, assiduity, and application which they ought, you may hereafter know where to lay the blame; not on the want of sufficient light and strength in the Gospel to prevail (wherein methinks you make very bold with it); but on the want of what the apostle requires in the ministers of it, some part whereof you may read in these words to Timothy: "But thou, O man of God, follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness: give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine: preach the word, be instant in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and doctrine:" and more to this purpose in his epistles to Timothy and Titus.

That the Christian religion has prevailed, and supported itself in the world now above these sixteen hundred years, you must grant; and that it has not been by force, is demonstration. For wherever the Christian religion prevailed, it did it, as far as we know any thing of the means of its propagation and support, without the help of that force, moderate force, which you say is alone useful and necessary. So that if the severities you condemn be, as you confess, apter to hinder

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than promote the Gospel, and it has nowhere had the assistance of your moderate penalties; it must follow, that it prevailed without force, only by its own strength and light, displayed and brought home to the understandings and hearts of the people, by the preachings, entreaties, and exhortations of its ministers. This at least you must grant, that force can be by no means necessary to make the Gospel prevail any where, till the utmost has been tried that can be done by arguments and exhortations, prayers and entreaties, and all the friendly ways of persuasion.

As to the other part of your assertion, "Nor is that always the true religion that does so spread and prevail," it is like they will demand instances of you, where false religions ever prevailed against the Gospel, without the assistance of force on the one side, or the betraying of it by the negligence and carelessness of its teachers on the other? So that if the Gospel any where wants the magistrate's assistance, it is only to make the ministers of it do their duty. I have heard of those, and possibly there are instances of it now wanting, who by their pious lives, peaceable and friendly carriage, and diligent application to the several conditions and capacities of their parishioners, and screening them as much as they could from the penalties of the law, have in a short time scarce left a dissenter in a parish, where, notwithstanding the force had been before used, they scarce found any other. But how far this has recommended such ministers to those who ought to encourage or follow the example, I wish you would inform yourself, and then tell me. But who sees not that a justice of peace's warrant is a shorter, and much easier way for the minister, than all this ado of instruction, debates, and particular application. Whether it be also more Christian, or more effectual to make real converts, others may be apt to inquire. This, I am sure, it is not justifiable, even by your very principles, to be used till the other has been thoroughly tried.

How far our Saviour is like to approve of this method in those whom he sends; what reward he is like to

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bestow on ministers of his word, who are forward to bring their brethren under such correction; those who call themselves successors of the apostles will do well to consider from what he himself says to them, Luke xii. 42. For that that was spoken particularly to the apostles and preachers of the Gospel, is evident not only from the words themselves, but from St. Peter's question. Our Saviour having in the foregoing verses declared in a parable the necessity of being watchful, St. Peter, verse 41, asks him, "Lord, speakest thou this parable unto us, or even to all?" To this demand our Saviour replies in these words: "Who then is that faithful and wise steward whom his lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season? Blessed is that servant whom the Lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing. Of a truth, I say unto you, he will make him ruler over all that he hath. But, and if that servant say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to beat the men-servants, and maidens, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken: the lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for him, and at an hour when he is not aware; and will cut him in sunder, and will appoint him his portion with unbelievers; or with hypocrites," as it is, Matth. xxiv. 51.

But if there be any thing in the argument for the truth of Christianity, (as God forbid there should not) that it has, and consequently can prevail without force; I think it can scarce be true in matter of fact, that false religions do also prevail against the Christian religion, when they come upon equal terms in competition, and as much diligence and industry is used by the teachers of it, as by seducers to false religions, the magistrate using his force on neither side. For if in this case, which is the fair trial, Christianity can prevail, and false religions too; it is possible contrarieties may prevail against one another both together. To make good therefore your assertion, you must show us, where ever any other religion so spread and prevailed, as to drive Christianity out of any country, without force, where

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the ministers of it did their duty to teach, adorn, and support it.

As to the following words, "Nor is that always the true religion which does so spread and prevail; as I doubt not but you will acknowledge with me, when you have but considered within how few generations after the flood the worship of false gods prevailed against that which Noah professed and taught his children, which was undoubtedly the true religion, almost to the utter exclusion of it (though that at first was the only religion in the world) without any aid from force, or assistance from the powers in being." This will need something more than a negative proof, as we shall see by and by.

Where I say, "The inventions of men need the force and help of men; a religion that is from God, wants not the assistance of human authority:" the first part of those words you take no notice of; neither grant nor deny it to be so; though perhaps it will prove a great part of the controversy between us.

To my question, "Whether if such a toleration as is proposed by the author of the first letter were established in France, Spain, Italy, Portugal, &c. the true religion would not be a gainer by it?" you answer, That the "true religion would be a loser by it in those few places where it is now established as the national religion;" and particularly you name England. It is then, it seems, by your way of moderate force and lower penalties, that in all countries where it is national, the true religion hath prevailed and subsists. For the controversy is between the author's universal toleration and your new way of force; for greater degrees of force you condemn as hurtful. Say then that in England, and wherever the true religion is national, it has been beholden to your force for the advantages and support it has had, and I will yield you the cause. But of national religions, and particularly that of England, I have occasion to speak more in another place.

In the next place you answer, That you suppose I do not hope I shall persuade the world to consent to my

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toleration. I think, by your logic, a proposition is not less true or false, because the world will or will not be persuaded to consent to it. And therefore, though it will not consent to a general toleration, it may nevertheless be true that it would be advantageous to the true religion: and if nobody must speak truth till he thinks all the world will be persuaded by it, you must have a very good opinion of your oratory, or else you will have a very good excuse to turn your parsonage, when you have one, into a sinecure. But though I have not so good an opinion of my gift of persuasion, as perhaps you have of yours; yet I think I may without any great presumption hope, that I may as soon persuade England, the world, or any government in it, to consent to my toleration, as you persuade it to content itself with moderate penalties.

You farther answer, If such a toleration established there would permit the doctrine of the church of England to be truly preached, and its worship set up in any popish, Mahometan, or pagan country, you think true religion would be a "gainer by it for some time; but you think withal, that an universal toleration would ruin it both there and every where else in the end." You grant it then possible, notwithstanding the corruption of human nature, that the true religion may gain somewhere, and for some time, by toleration: it will gain under a new toleration you think, but decay under an old one: would you had told us the reason why you think so. "But you think there is great reason to fear, that, without God's extraordinary providence, it would in a much shorter time, than any one who does not well consider the matter will imagine, be most effectually extirpated by it throughout the world." If you have considered right, and the matter be really so, it is demonstration that the Christian religion, since Constantine's time, as well as the true religion before Moses's time, must needs have been totally extinguished out of the world, and have so continued, unless by miracle and immediate revelation restored. For those men, *i. e.* the magistrates, upon whose being of the true religion, the preservation of it, according to you, de-

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pends, living all of them under a free toleration, must needs lose the true religion effectually and speedily from among them; and, they quitting the true religion, the assistance of force, which should support it against a general defection, be utterly lost.

The princes of the world are, I suppose, as well infected with the depraved nature of man as the rest of their brethren. These, whether a hundred or a thousand, suppose they lived together in one society wherein, with the true religion, there were a free toleration, and no coactive power of the magistrate employed about matters of religion; would the true religion be soon extirpated amongst them? If you say it would not, you must grant toleration not to be so destructive of the true religion as you say; or you must think them of another race than the rest of corrupt men, and free from that general taint. If you grant that the true religion would be quickly extirpated amongst them by toleration, living together in one society; the same will happen to them, living as princes, where they are free from all coactive power of the magistrate in matters of religion, and have as large a toleration as can be imagined: unless you will say, that depraved human nature works less in a prince than a subject; and is most tame, most mortified, where it has most liberty and temptation. Must not then, if your maxim be true, toleration quickly deprive the few orthodox princes that are in the world, (take it when you will) of the true religion; and with them take away the assistance of authority, which is necessary to support it amongst their subjects? Toleration then does not, whatever your fears are, make that woeful wreck on true religion which you talk of.

I shall give you another evidence of it, and then come to examine your great reason taken from the corruption of human nature, and the instance you so often repeat, and build so much on, the apostasy after the flood. Toleration, you say, would quickly and effectually extirpate the true religion throughout the world. What now is the means to preserve true religion in the world? If you may be believed, it is force; but not all force;

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great severities, fire, faggot, imprisonment, loss of estate, &c. These will do more harm than good; it is only lower and moderate penalties, some tolerable inconveniencies, can do the business. If then moderate force hath not been all along, no, nor any where, made use of for the preservation of the true religion; the maintenance and support of the true religion in the world has not been owing to what you oppose to toleration; and so your argument against toleration is out of doors.

You give us in this and the foregoing pages the grounds of your fear; it is the corruption of human nature which opposes the true religion. You express it thus: "Idolatry prevailing against it [the true religion] not by its own light and strength, for it could have nothing of either, but merely by the advantage it had in the corruption and pravity of human nature, finding out to itself more agreeable religions than the true. For, say you, whatever hardships some false religions may impose, it will however always be easier to carnal, worldly-minded men, to give even their first-born for their transgressions, than to mortify their lusts from which they spring; which no religion but the true requires of them." I wonder, saying this, how you could any longer mistake the magistrate's duty, in reference to religion, and not see wherein force truly can and ought to be serviceable to it. What you have said plainly shows you that the assistance the magistrate's authority can give to the true religion, is in subduing of lusts; and its being directed against pride, injustice, rapine, luxury, and debauchery, and those other immoralities which come properly under his cognizance, and may be corrected by punishments; and not by the imposing of creeds and ceremonies, as you tell us. Sound and decent you might have left out, whereof their fancies, and not the law of God, will always be judge, and consequently the rule.

The case between the true and false religions, as you have stated it, in short, stands thus: "True religion has always light and strength of its own sufficient to prevail with all that seriously consider it, and with-

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out prejudice. Idolatry or false religions have nothing of light or strength to prevail with." Why then does not the true religion prevail against the false, having so much the advantage in light and strength? The counterbalance of prejudice hinders. And wherein does that consist? The drunkard must part with his cups and companions, and the voluptuous man with his pleasures. The proud and vain must lay by all excess in apparel, furniture, and attendance; and money (the support of all these) must be got only by the ways of justice, honesty, and fair industry: and every one must live peaceably, uprightly, and friendly with his neighbour. Here then the magistrate's assistance is wanting: here they may and ought to interpose their power, and by severities against drunkenness, lasciviousness, and all sorts of debauchery; by a steady and unrelaxed punishment of all the ways of fraud and injustice; and by their administration, countenance, and example, reduce the irregularities of men's manners into order, and bring sobriety, peaceableness, industry, and honesty into fashion. This is their proper business every where; and for this they have a commission from God, both by the light of nature and revelation; and by this removing the great counterpoise, which lies in strictness of life, and is so strong a bias, with the greatest part, against the true religion, they would cast the balance on that side. For if men were forced by the magistrate to live sober, honest, and strict lives, whatever their religion were, would not the advantage be on the side of truth, when the gratifying of their lusts were not to be obtained by forsaking her? In men's lives lies the main obstacle to right opinions in religion: and if you will not believe me, yet what a very rational man of the church of England says in the case, [Dr. Bentley, in his sermon of the Folly of Atheism, p. 16] will deserve to be remembered: "Did religion bestow heaven, without any forms and conditions, indifferently upon all; if the crown of life was hereditary, and free to good and bad, and not settled by covenant upon the elect of God only, such as live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world; I believe there would be no such

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thing as an infidel among us. And, without controversy, it is the way and means of attaining to heaven, that makes profane scoffers so willing to let go the expectation of it. It is not the articles of the creed, but their duty to God and their neighbour, that is such an inconsistent, incredible legend. They will not practise the rules of religion, and therefore they cannot believe the 'doctrines' of it." The ingenious author will pardon me the change of one word, which I doubt not but suits his opinion, though it did not so well that argument he was then on.

You grant the true religion has always light and strength to prevail; false religions have neither. Take away the satisfaction of men's lusts, and which then, I pray, hath the advantage? Will men, against the light of their reason, do violence to their understandings, and forsake truth, and salvation too, gratis? You tell us here, "No religion but the true requires of men the difficult task of mortifying their lusts." This being granted you, what service will this do you to prove the necessity of force to punish all dissenters in England? Do none of their religions require the mortifying of lusts as well as yours?

And now let us consider your instance whereon you build so much, that we hear of it over and over again. For you tell us, "Idolatry prevailed, but yet not by the help of force, as has been sufficiently shown." And again, "That truth left to shift for herself will not do well enough, has been sufficiently shown." What you have done to show this is to be seen where you tell us, "Within how few generations after the flood the worship of false gods prevailed against the religion which Noah professed and taught his children, (which was undoubtedly the true religion) almost to the utter exclusion of it, (though that at first was the only religion in the world) without any aid from force, or the assistance of the powers in being, for any thing we find in the history of those times, as we may reasonably believe, considering that it found an entrance into the world, and entertainment in it, when it could have no such aid or assistance. Of

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which (besides the corruption of human nature) you suppose there can no other cause be assigned, or none more probable than this, that the powers then in being did not do what they might and ought to have done towards the preventing or checking that horrible apostasy." Here you tell us, that the "worship of false gods, within a very few generations after the flood, prevailed against the true religion, almost to the utter exclusion of it." This you say indeed, but without any proofs, and unless that be showing, you have not, as you pretend, any way shown it. Out of what records, I beseech you, have you it, that the true religion was almost wholly extirpated out of the world, within a few generations after the flood? The Scripture, the largest history we have of those times, says nothing of it; nor does, as I remember, mention any as guilty of idolatry within two or three hundred years after the flood. In Canaan itself I do not think that you can out of any credible history show, that there was any idolatry within ten or twelve generations after Noah; much less that it had so overspread the world, and extirpated the true religion out of that part of it, where the scene lay of those actions recorded in the history of the Bible. In Abraham's time, Melchisedec, who was king of Salem, was also the priest of the most high God. We read that God, with an immediate hand, punished miraculously, first mankind, at the confusion of Babel, and afterward Sodom, and four other cities; but in neither of these places is there any the least mention of idolatry, by which they provoked God, and drew down vengeance on themselves. So that truly you have shown nothing at all; and what the Scripture shows is against you. For besides that it is plain by Melchisedec, the king of Salem, and priest of the most high God, to whom Abraham paid tithes, that all the land of Canaan was not yet overspread with idolatry, though afterwards in the time of Joshua, by the forfeiture was therefore made of it to the Israelites, one may have reason to suspect it were more defiled with it than any part of the world; besides Salem, I say, he that reads the story of Abimelech, Gen. xx. xxi. xxvi.

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will have reason to think, that he also and his kingdom, though Philistines, were not then infected with idolatry.

You think they, and almost all mankind, were idolaters, but you may be mistaken; and that which may serve to show it, is the example of Elijah the prophet, who was at least as infallible a guesser as you, and was as well instructed in the state and history of his own country and time, as you can be in the state of the whole world three or four thousand years ago. Elijah thought that idolatry had wholly extirpated the true religion out of Israel, and complains thus to God: "The children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thy altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword: and I, even I alone, am left, and they seek my life, to take it away," 1 Kings, xix. 10. And he is so fully persuaded of it, that he repeats it again, verse 14; and yet God tells him, that he had there yet seven thousand knees that had not bowed to Baal, seven thousand that were not idolaters: though this was in the reign of Ahab, a king zealous for idolatry; and in a kingdom set up in an idolatrous worship, which had continued the national religion, established and promoted by the continued succession of several idolatrous princes. And though the national religions soon after the flood were false, which you are far enough from proving; how does it thence follow, that the true religion was near extirpated? which it must needs quite have been before St. Peter's time, if there were so great reason to fear, as you tell us, that the true religion, without the assistance of force, "would in a much shorter time, than any one that does not well consider the matter would imagine, be most effectually extirpated throughout the world." For above two thousand years after Noah's time, St. Peter tells us, "that in every nation, he that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, is accepted by him," Acts x. 35. By which words, and by the occasion on which they were spoken, it is manifest, that in countries where for two thousand years together no force had been used for the support of Noah's true religion, it was not yet wholly extirpated. But that you

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may not think it was so near, that there was but one left, only Cornelius, if you will look into Acts xvii. 4, you will find a great multitude of them at Thessalonica, "And of the devout Greeks a great multitude believed, and consorted with Paul and Silas." And again, verse 17, more of them in Athens, a city wholly given to idolatry. For that those σεβόμενοι which we translate devout, and whereof many are mentioned in the Acts, were Gentiles, who worshipped the true God, and kept the precepts of Noah, Mr. Mede has abundantly proved. So that whatsoever you, "who have well considered the matter," may imagine of the shortness of time, wherein Noah's religion would be "effectually extirpated throughout the world," without the assistance of force; we find it at Athens, at Philippi, at Corinth, amongst the Romans, in Antioch of Pisidia, in Thessalonica, above two thousand years after, and that not so near being extinguished, but that in some of those places the professors of it were numerous: at Thessalonica they are called a great multitude: at Antioch many: and how many of them were in other parts of the world, whereof there was no occasion to make mention in that short history of the Acts of Apostles, who knows? If they answered, in other places, to what were found in these, as what reason is there to suppose they should not? I think we may imagine them to be as many as there were effectually of the true religion Christians in Europe, a little before the Reformation; notwithstanding the assistance the Christian religion had from authority, after the withdrawing of miracles.

But you have a salvo, for you write warily, and endeavour to save yourself on all hands: you say, "There is great reason to fear, that without God's *extraordinary providence*, it would in a much shorter time, than any one who does not well consider the matter would imagine, be most effectually extirpated by it, throughout the world." It is without doubt the providence of God which governs the affairs both of the world and his church; and to that, whether you call it ordinary or extraordinary, you may trust the preservation of his church, without the use of such

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means as he has nowhere appointed or authorized. You fancy force necessary to preserve the true religion, and hence you conclude the magistrate authorized, without any farther commission from God, to use it, "if there be no other means left:" and therefore that must be used: if religion should be preserved without it, it is by the extraordinary providence of God; where extraordinary signifies nothing, but begging the thing in question. The true religion has been preserved many ages, in the church, without force. Ay, say you, that was by the "extraordinary providence of God." His providence which over-rules all events, we easily grant it: but why extraordinary providence? because force was necessary to preserve it. And why was force necessary? because otherwise, without "extraordinary providence," it cannot be preserved. In such circles, covered under good words, but misapplied, one might show you taking many a turn in your answer, if it were fit to waste other time to trace your wanderings. God has appointed preaching, teaching, persuasion, instruction, as a means to continue and propagate his true religion in the world; and if it were any where preserved and propagated without that, we might call it his "extraordinary providence;" but the means he has appointed being used, we may conclude, that men have done their duties, and so may leave it to his providence, however we will call it, to preserve the little flock, which he bids not to fear, to the end of the world.

But let us return again to what you say, to make good this hypothesis of yours, That idolatry entered first into the world by the contrivance, and spread itself by the endeavours of private men, without the assistance of the magistrates and those in power. To prove this, you tell us, "that it found entrance into the world, and entertainment in it, when it could have no such aid or assistance." When was this, I beseech you, that idolatry found this entrance into the world? Under what king's reign was it, that you are so positive it could have no such aid or assistance? If you had named the time, the thing, though of no great moment to you, had been sure. But now we may very justly ques-

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tion this bare assertion of yours. For since we find, as far back as we have any history of it, that the great men of the world were always forward to set up and promote idolatry and false religions; you ought to have given us some reason why, without authority from history, you affirm that idolatry, at its entrance into the world, had not that assistance from men in power, which it never failed of afterwards. Who they were that made Israel to sin, the Scripture tells us. Their kings were so zealous promoters of idolatry, that there is scarce any one of them, that has not that brand left upon him in holy writ.

One of the first false religions, whose rise and way of propagating we have an account of in sacred history, was by an ambitious usurper, who, having rebelled against his master, with a false title set up a false religion, to secure his power and dominion. Why this might not have been done before Jeroboam's days, and idols set up at other places as well as at Dan and Bethel, to serve political ends, will need some other proof than barely saying, it could not be so at first. The devil, unless much more ignorant, was not less busy in those days to engage princes in his favour, and to weave religion into affairs of state, the better to introduce his worship and to support idolatry, by accommodating it to the ambition, vanity, or superstition, of men in power; and therefore you may as well say, that the corruption of human nature, as that the assistance of the powers in being, did not, in those days, help forward false religions; because your reading has furnished you with no particular mention of it out of history. But you need but say, that the "worship of false gods prevailed without any aid from force, or the assistance of the powers in being, for any thing we find in the history of those times," and then you have sufficiently shown, what? even that you have just nothing to show for your assertion.

But whatever that any thing is, which you find in history, you may meet with men, whose reading yet I will not compare with yours, who think they have found in history, that princes, and those in power, first cor-

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rupted the true religion, by setting up the images and symbols of their predecessors in their temples, which, by their influence, and the ready obedience of the priests they appointed, were in succession of time proposed to the people as objects of their worship. Thus they think they find in history that Isis, queen of Egypt, with her counsellor Thoth, instituted the funeral rites of king Osiris, by the honour done to the sacred ox. They think they find also in history, that the same Thoth, who was also king of Egypt in his turn, invented the figures of the first Egyptian gods, Saturn, Dagon, Jupiter Hammon, and the rest: that is, the figures of their statues or idols; and that he instituted the worship and sacrifices of these gods: and his institutions were so well assisted by those in authority, and observed by the priests they set up, that the worship of those gods soon became the religion of that, and a pattern to other nations. And here we may perhaps, with good reason, place the rise and original of idolatry after the flood, there being nothing of this kind more ancient. So ready was the ambition, vanity, or superstition of princes, to introduce their predecessors into the divine worship of the people; to secure to themselves the greater veneration from their subjects, as descended from the gods; or to erect such a worship, and such a priesthood, as might awe the blinded and seduced people into that obedience they desired. Thus Ham, by the authority of his successors, the rulers of Egypt, is first brought for the honour of his name and memory into their temples; and never left, till he is erected into a god, and made Jupiter Hammon, &c. which fashion took afterwards with the princes of other countries.

Was not the great god of the eastern nations, Baal, or Jupiter Belus, one of the first kings of Assyria? And which, I pray, is the more likely, that courts, by their instruments the priests, should thus advance the honour of kings amongst the people for the ends of ambition and power; or the people find out these refined ways of doing it, and introduce them into courts for the enslaving themselves? What idolatry does your history tell you of among the Greeks, before Phoroneus and

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Danaus, kings of the Argives, and Cecrops and Theseus, kings of Attica, and Cadmus, king of Thebes, introduced it? an art of rule it is probable they borrowed from the Egpptians. So that if you had not vouched the silence of history, without consulting it, you would possibly have found, that in the first ages princes, by their influence and aid; by the help and artifice of the priests they employed; their fables of their gods, their mysteries and oracles, and all the assistance they could give it by their authority; did so much against the truth, before direct force was grown into fashion, and appeared openly; that there would be little reason of putting the guard and propagation of the true religion into their hands now, and arming them with force to promote it.

That this was the original of idolatry in the world, and that it was borrowed by other magistrates from the Egyptians, is farther evident, in that this worship was settled in Egypt, and grown the national religion there, before the gods of Greece and several other idolatrous countries were born. For though they took their pattern of deifying their deceased princes from the Egyptians, and kept, as near as they could, to the number and genealogies of the Egyptian gods; yet they took the names still of some great men of their own, which they accommodated to the mythology of the Egyptians. Thus, by the assistance of the powers in being, idolatry entered into the world after the flood. Whereof, if there were not so clear footsteps in history, why yet should you not imagine princes and magistrates, engaged in false religions, as ready to employ their power for the maintaining and promoting their false religions in those days, as we find them now? And therefore, what you say in the next words, of the entrance of idolatry into the world, and the entertainment it found in it, will not pass for so very evident, without proof; though you tell us ever so confidently, that you "suppose, besides the corruption of human nature, there can no other cause be assigned of it, or none more probable than this, that the powers then in being did not what they might and ought to have done," *i. e.* if you mean it to your purpose, use force your way, to make men consider;

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or to "impose creeds and ways of worship, towards the preventing that horrible apostasy."

I grant that the entrance and growth of idolatry might be owing to the negligence of the powers in being, in that they did not do what they might and ought to have done, in using their authority to suppress the enormities of men's manners, and correct the irregularity of their lives. But this was not all the assistance they gave to that horrible apostasy: they were, as far as history gives us any light, the promoters of it, and leaders in it; and did what they ought not to have done, by setting up false religions, and using their authority to establish them, to serve their corrupt and ambitious designs.

National religions, established by authority, and enforced by the powers in being, we hear of every where, as far back as we have any account of the rise and growth of the religions of the world. Show me any place, within those few generations, wherein you say the apostasy prevailed after the flood, where the magistrates being of the true religion, the subjects by the liberty of a toleration were led into false religions; and then you will produce something against liberty of conscience. But to talk of that great apostasy, as wholly owing to toleration, when you cannot produce one instance of toleration then in the world, is to say what you please.

That the majority of mankind were then, and always have been, by the corruption and pravity of human nature, led away, and kept from embracing the true religion, is past doubt. But whether this be owing to toleration in matters of religion, is the question. David describes a horrible corruption and apostasy in his time, so as to say, "There is none that doeth good, no not one," Psal. xiv. and yet I do not think you will say a toleration then in that kingdom was the cause of it. If the greatest part cannot be ill without a toleration, I am afraid you must be fain to find out a toleration in every country, and in all ages of the world. For I think it is true, of all times and places, that the broad way, that leadeth to destruction, has had most travellers. I would be glad to know where it was that force,

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your way applied; *i. e.* with punishments only upon non-conformists, ever prevailed to bring the greater number into the narrow way, that leads unto life, which, our Saviour tells us, there are few that find.

The corruption of human nature, you say, opposes the true religion. I grant it you. There was also, say you, a horrible apostasy after the flood; let this also be granted you: and yet from hence it will not follow, that the true religion cannot subsist and prevail in the world without the assistance, of force, your way applied, till you have shown that the false religions, which were the inventions of men, grew up under toleration, and not by the encouragement and assistance of the powers in being.

How near soever therefore the true religion was to be extinguished within a few generations after the flood; (which whether more in danger then, than in most ages since, is more than you can show) this will be still the question, whether the liberty of toleration, or the authority of the powers in being, contributed most to it? And whether there can be no other, nor more probable cause assigned, than the want of force your way applied, I shall leave the reader to judge. This I am sure, whatever causes any one else shall assign, are as well proved as yours, if they offer them only as their conjectures.

Not but that I think men could run into false and foolish ways of worship, without the instigation or assistance of human authority; but the powers of the world, as far as we have any history, having been always forward enough, (true religion as little serving princes as private men's lusts) to take up wrong religions, and as forward to employ their authority to impose the religion, good or bad, which they had once taken up; I can see no reason why the not using of force, by the princes of the world, should be assigned as the sole, or so much as the most probable cause of propagating the false religions of the world, or extirpating the true; or how you can so positively say, idolatry prevailed without any assistance from the powers in being.

Since therefore history leads us to the magistrates, as-

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the authors and promoters of idolatry in the world, to which we may suppose their not suppressing of vice, joined as another cause of the spreading of false religions; you were best consider, whether you can still suppose there can no other cause be assigned of the prevailing of the worship of false gods, but the magistrate's not interposing his authority in matters of religion. For that that cannot with any probability at all be assigned as any cause, I shall give you this farther reason. You impute the prevailing of false religions to "the corruption and pravity of human nature, left to itself, unbridled by authority." Now if force, your way applied, does not at all bridle the corruption and pravity of human nature; the magistrate's not so interposing his authority cannot be assigned as any cause at all of that apostasy. So that, let that apostasy have what rise, and spread as far as you please, it will not make one jot for force, your way applied, or show that that can receive any assistance your way from authority. For your use of authority and force, being only to bring men to an outward conformity to the national religion, it leaves the corruption and pravity of human nature as unbridled as before, as I have shown elsewhere.

You tell us, "that it is not true, that the true religion will prevail by its own light and strength, without miracles, or the assistance of the powers in being, because of the corruption of human nature." And for this you give us an instance in the apostasy presently after the flood. And you tell us, that without the assistance of force it would presently be extirpated out of the world. If the corruption of human nature be so universal and so strong, that without the help of force the true religion is too weak to stand it, and cannot at all prevail without miracles or force; how come men ever to be converted, in countries where the national religion is false? If you say by extraordinary providence; what that amounts to, has been shown. If you say this corruption is so potent in all men, as to oppose and prevail against the Gospel, not assisted by force or miracles; that is not true. If in most men; so it is still, even where

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force is used. For I desire you to name me a country, where the greatest part are really and truly Christians, such as you confidently believe Christ, at the last day, will own to be so. In England having, as you do, excluded all the dissenters; (or else why would you have them punished, to bring them to embrace the true religion?) you must, I fear, allow yourself a great latitude in thinking, if you think that the corruption of human nature does not so far prevail, even amongst conformists, as to make the ignorance, and lives, of great numbers amongst them, such as suits not at all with the spirit of true Christianity. How great their ignorance may be, in the more spiritual and elevated parts of the Christian religion, may be guessed by what the reverend bishop, before cited, says of it, in reference to a rite of the church, the most easy and obvious to be instructed in, and understood. His words are, "In the common management of that holy rite (confirmation) it is but too visible, that of those multitudes that crowd to it, the far greater part come merely as if they were to receive the bishop's blessing, without any sense of the vow made by them, and of their renewing their baptismal engagements in it." Past. Care, p. 189. And if Origen were now alive, might he not find many in our church, to whom these words of his might be applied, "Whose faith signifies only thus much, and goes no farther than this, viz. that they come duly to the church, and bow their heads to the priest?" &c. Hom. in Jos. IX. For it seems it was then the fashion to bow to the priest, as it is now to the altar. If, therefore, you say force is necessary, because without it no men will so consider as to embrace the true religion, for the salvation of their souls; that I think is manifestly false. If you say it is necessary to use such means as will make the greatest part so embrace it, you must use some other means than force, your way applied; for that does not so far work on the majority. If you say it is necessary, because possibly it may work on some, which bare preaching and persuasion will not; I answer, if possibly your moderate punishments may work on some, and therefore they are necessary, it is as possible that greater

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punishments may work on others, and therefore they are necessary, and so on to the utmost severities.

That the corruption of human nature is every where spread, and that it works powerfully in the children of disobedience, "who receive not the love of the truth, but have pleasure in unrighteousness;" and therefore God gives them up to believe a lie; nobody, I think, will deny. But that this corruption of human nature works equally in all men, or in all ages; and so that God will, or ever did, give up all men, not restrained by force, your way modified and applied, to believe a lie (as all false religions are), that I yet see no reason to grant. Nor will this instance of Noah's religion, you so much rely on, ever persuade, till you have proved, that from those eight men which brought the true religion with them into the new world, there were not eight thousand, or eighty thousand, which retained it in the world in the worst times of the apostasy. And secondly, till you have proved that the false religions of the world prevailed, without any aid from force, or the assistance of the powers in being. And thirdly, that the decay of the true religion was for want of force, your moderate force; neither of which you have at all proved, as I think it manifest.

One consideration more, touching Noah and his religion, give me leave to suggest, and that is, if force were so necessary for the support of true religion, as you make it, it is strange God, who gave him precepts about other things, should never reveal this to him, nor any body else, that I know. To this you, who have confessed the "Scripture not to have given the magistrate this commission," must say, that it is plain enough in the commission that he has from the law of nature, and so needed not any revelation to instruct the magistrate in the right he has to use force. I confess the magistrates have used force in matters of religion, and have been as confidently and constantly put upon it by their priests, as if they had as clear a commission from heaven, as St. Peter had to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles. But yet it is plain, notwithstanding that commission from the law of nature, there

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needs some farther instruction from revelation; since it does not appear that they have found out the right use of force, such as the true religion requires for its preservation; and though you have, after several thousands of years, at last discovered it, yet it is very imperfectly; you not being able to tell, if a law were now to be made against those who have not considered as they ought, what are those moderate penalties which are to be employed against them, though yet without that all the rest signifies nothing. But however doubtful you are in this, I am glad to find you so direct in putting men's rejecting the true religion, upon the difficulty they have to "mortify their lusts, which the true religion requires of them," and I desire you to remember it in other places, where I have occasion to mind you of it.

To conclude, That we may see the great advantage your cause will receive from that instance you so much rely on, of the apostasy after the flood, I shall oppose another to it. You say, that "idolatry prevailed in the world in a few generations, almost to the utter exclusion of the true religion, without any aid from force, or assistance of the powers in being, by reason of toleration." And, therefore, you think there is great reason to fear, that "the true religion would, by toleration, quickly be most effectually extirpated throughout the world:" And I say, that after Christianity was received for the religion of the empire, and whilst political laws and force interposed in it, a horrible apostasy prevailed, to almost the utter exclusion of true religion, and a general introducing of idolatry. And, therefore, I think there is great reason to fear more harm than good from the use of force in religion.

This I think as good an argument against, as yours for, force, and something better; since what you build on is only presumed by you, not proved from history: whereas the matter of fact here is well known; nor will you deny it, when you consider the state of religion in Christendom under the assistance of that force, which you tell us succeeded and supplied the place of withdrawn miracles, which in your opinion are so necessary

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in the absence of force, that you make that the reason of their continuance; and tell us, they "were continued till force could be had, not so much for evincing the truth of the Christian religion, as to supply the want of the magistrate's assistance." So that whenever force failed, there, according to your hypothesis, are miracles to supply its want; for, without one of them, the true religion, if we may believe you, will soon be utterly extirpated; and what force, in the absence of miracles, produced in Christendom several ages before the Reformation, is so well known, that it will be hard to find what service your way of arguing will do any but the Romish religion.

But to take your argument in its full latitude, you say, but you say it without book, that there was once a toleration in the world to the almost utter extirpation of the true religion; and I say to you, that as far as records authorize either opinion, we may say force has been always used in matters of religion, to the great prejudice of the true religion, and the professors of it. And there not being an age wherein you can show me, upon a fair trial of an established national toleration, that the true religion was extirpated, or endangered, so much as you pretend by it (whereas there is no age, whereof we have sufficient history to judge of this matter, wherein it will not be easy to find that the true religion, and its followers, suffered by force): you will in vain endeavour, by instances, to prove the ill effects or uselessness of toleration, such as the author proposed; which I challenge you to show me was ever set up in the world, or that the true religion suffered by it; and it is to the want of it, and the restraints and disadvantages the true religion has laboured under, its so little spreading in the world will justly be imputed: until, from better experiments, you have something to say against it.

Our Saviour has promised that he will build his church on this fundamental truth, that he is "Christ the Son of God; so that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it:" and this I believe, though you tell us the true religion is not able to subsist without the

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assistance of force, when miracles cease. I do not remember that our Saviour any where promises any other assistance but that of his Spirit; or gives his little flock any encouragement to expect much countenance or help from the great men of the world, or the coercive power of the magistrates, nor any where authorizes them to use it for the support of his church: "not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble," 1 Cor. i. 26, is the style of the Gospel; and I believe will be found to belong to all ages of the church militant, past and to come, as well as to the first: for God, as St. Paul tells us, has chosen the "foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and the weak things of the world to confound the mighty;" and this not only till miracles ceased, but ever since. "To be hated for Christ's name sake, and by much tribulation to enter into the kingdom of heaven," has been the general and constant lot of the people of God, as well as it seems to be the current strain of the New Testament; which promises nothing of secular power or greatness; says nothing of "kings being nursing fathers, or queens nursing mothers:" which prophecy, whatever meaning it have, it is like our Saviour would not have omitted to support his church with some hopes and assurance of such assistance, if it were to have any accomplishment before his second coming; when Israel shall come in again, and with the Gentiles make up the fulness of his glorious kingdom. But the tenour of the New Testament is, "All that will live godly in Jesus Christ shall suffer persecution," 2 Tim. iii. 12.

In your Argument considered, you tell us, "that no man can fail of finding the way of salvation that seeks it as he ought." In my answer, I take notice to you, that the places of Scripture you cite to prove it, point out this way of seeking as we ought, to be a good life: as particularly that of St. John, "If any one will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God:" upon which I use these words: "So that these places, if they prove what you cite them for, that no man can fail of finding the way of salvation, who seeks it as he ought;

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they do also prove, that a good life is the only way to seek as we ought; and that therefore the magistrates, if they would put men upon seeking the way of salvation as they ought, should by their laws and penalties force them to a good life; a good conversation being the surest and readiest way to a right understanding. And that if magistrates will severely and impartially set themselves against vice, in whomsoever it is found, true religion will be spread wider than ever hitherto it has been by the imposition of creeds and ceremonies." To this you reply, "Whether the magistrates setting themselves severely and impartially against what you suppose I call vice, or the imposition of sound creeds and decent ceremonies, does more conduce to the spreading the true religion, and rendering it fruitful in the lives of its professors, we need not examine; you confess, you think, both together do best; and this, you think, is as much as needs be said to that paragraph." If it had been put to you, whether a good living, or a good prebend, would more conduce to the enlarging your fortune, I think it would be allowed you as no improper or unlikely answer, what you say here, "I think both together would do best;" but here the case is otherwise: your thinking determines not the point: and other people of equal authority may, and I will answer for it, do think otherwise; but because I pretend to no authority, I will give you a reason why your thinking is insufficient. You tell us, that "force is not a fit means, where it is not necessary as well as useful;" and you prove it to be necessary, because there is no other means left. Now if the severity of the magistrate, against what I call vice, will, as you will not deny, promote a good life, and that be the right way to seek the truths of religion; here is another means besides imposing of creeds and ceremonies, to promote the true religion; and therefore your argument for its necessity, because of no other means left, being gone, you cannot say "both together are best," when one of them being not necessary, is therefore, by your own confession, not to be used.

I having said, That if such an indirect and at a

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distance usefulness were sufficient to justify the use of force, the magistrate might make his subjects eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven: you reply, that you "suppose I will not say castration is necessary, because you hope I acknowledge, that marriage, and that grace which God denies to none who seriously ask it, are sufficient for that purpose." And I hope you acknowledge, that preaching, admonitions, and instructions, and that grace which God denies to none who seriously ask it, are sufficient for salvation. So that by this answer of yours, there being no more necessity of force to make men of the true religion, than there is of castration to make men chaste; it will still remain that the magistrate, when he thinks fit, may, upon your principles, as well castrate men to make them chaste, as use force to make them embrace the truth that must save them.

If castration be not necessary, "because marriage and the grace of God are sufficient" without it: nor will force be necessary, because preaching and the grace of God are sufficient without it; and this, I think, by your own rule, where you tell us, "Where there are many useful means, and some of them are sufficient without the rest, there is no necessity of using them all." So that you must either quit your necessity of force, or take in castration too: which, however it might not go down with the untractable and desperately perverse and obstinate people in these western countries, yet is a doctrine, you may hope, may meet with a better reception in the Ottoman empire, and recommend you to some of my Mahometans.

To my saying, "If what we are apt to think useful, were thence to be concluded so, we might be in danger to be obliged to believe the pretended miracles of the church of Rome, by your way of reasoning; unless we will say, that which without impiety cannot be said, that the wise and benign Disposer and Governor of all things does not use all useful means for promoting his own honour in the world, and the good of souls." This, I think, will conclude as much for miracles as

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for force: you reply, "you think it will not; for in the place I intend, you speak not of useful, but of competent, *i. e.* sufficient means. Now, competent or sufficient means are necessary; but you think no man will say that all useful means are so: and therefore though, as you affirm, it cannot be said without impiety, that the wise and benign Disposer and Governor of all things has not furnished mankind with competent means for the promoting his own honour in the world, and the good of souls; yet it is very agreeable with piety, and with truth too, to say that he does not now use all useful means: because, as none of his attributes obliges him to use more than sufficient means; so he may use sufficient means, without using all useful means. For where there are many useful means, and some of them are sufficient without the rest, there is no necessity of them all. So that from God's not using miracles now, to promote the true religion, I cannot conclude that he does not think them useful now, but only that he does not think them necessary. And therefore, though what we are apt to think useful were thence to be concluded so; yet if whatever is useful be not likewise to be concluded necessary, there is no reason to fear that we should be obliged to believe the miracles pretended to by the church of Rome. For if miracles be not now necessary, there is no inconvenience in thinking the miracles pretended to by the church of Rome to be but pretended miracles." To which I answer, Put it how you will, for competent means, or useful means, it will conclude for miracles still as much as for force. Your words are these, "If such a degree of outward force, as has been mentioned, be really of great and necessary use for the advancing these ends, as, taking the world as we find it, you say, you think it appears to be; then it must be acknowledged there is a right somewhere to use it for the advancing those ends; unless we will say, what without impiety cannot be said, that the wise and benign Disposer of all things has not furnished mankind with competent means for the promoting his

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own honour in the world, and the good of souls." What, I beseech you, now is the sum of this argument, but this, "force is of great and necessary use; therefore the wise and benign Disposer of all things, who will not leave mankind unfurnished (which it would be impiety to say) of competent means for the promoting his honour in the world, and the good of souls, has given somewhere a right to use it?"

Let us try it now, whether it will not do as well for miracles. Miracles "are of great and necessary use, as great and necessary, at least, as force; therefore the wise and benign Disposer of all things, who will not leave mankind unfurnished, which it would be impiety to say, of competent means for the promoting his honour in the world, and the good of souls," has given somewhere a power of miracles. I ask you, when I in the second letter used your own words, applied to miracles instead of force, would they not conclude then as well for miracles as for force? For you must remember there was not then in all your scheme one word of miracles to supply the place of force. Force alone was mentioned, force alone was necessary; all was laid on force. Nor was it easy to divine, that miracles should be taken in, to mend the defects of your hypothesis; which in your answer to me you now have done, and I easily allow it, without holding you to any thing you have said, and shall always do so. For seeking truth, and not triumph, as you frequently suggest, I shall always take your hypothesis as you please to reform it, and either embrace it, or show you why I do not.

Let us see, therefore, whether this argument will do any better now your scheme is mended, and you make force or miracles necessary. If force or miracles are of "great and necessary use for the promoting true religion and the salvation of souls; then it must be acknowledged, that there is somewhere a right to use the one, or a power to do the other, for the advancing those ends; unless we will say, what without impiety cannot be said, that the wise and benign Disposer and Governor of all things has not furnished mankind with competent means for the promoting his own honour, and the good

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souls." From whence it will follow, if your argument be good, that where men have not a right to use force, there still we are to expect miracles, unless we will say, &c. Now, where the magistrates are not of the true religion, there, by this part of your scheme, there is a right in nobody to use force; for if there were, what need of miracles, as you tell us there was, in the first age of Christianity, to supply that want? since the magistrates, who were of false religions then, were furnished with as much right, if that were enough, as they are now. So that where the magistrates are of false religions, there you must, upon your principles, affirm miracles are still to supply the want of force; "unless you will say, what without impiety cannot be said, that the wise and benign Disposer and Governor of all things hath not furnished mankind with competent means for the promoting his own honour in the world, and the good of souls." Now how far this will favour the pretences of the church of Rome to miracles in the East and West Indies, and other parts not under popish governments, you were best consider. This is evident, that in all countries where the true religion is not received for the religion of the state, and supported and encouraged by the laws of it, you must allow miracles to be as necessary now, as ever they were any where in the world, for the supply of the want of force, before the magistrates were Christians. And then what advantage your doctrine gives to the church of Rome is very visible. For they, like you, supposing theirs the only true religion, are supplied by you with this argument for it; viz. That the "true religion will not prevail by its own light and strength, without the assistance of miracles or authority; which are the competent means, which, without impiety, it cannot be said, that the wise and benign Disposer and Governor of all things has not furnished mankind with." From whence they will not think it hard to draw this consequence, that therefore the wise and benign Governor of all things has continued in their church the power of miracles; (which yours does not so much as pretend to) to supply the want of the magistrate's assistance,

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where that cannot be had to make the true religion prevail. And if a papist should press you with this argument, I would gladly know what you would reply to him.

Though this be enough to make good what I said, yet since I seek truth, more than my own justification, let us examine a little what it is you here say of "competent means. Competent means, you say, are necessary; but you think no man will say, all useful means are so." If you think you speak plain, clear, determined sense, when you used this good English word competent, I pity you: if you did it with skill, I send you to my pagans and Mahometans. But this safe way of talking, though it be not altogether so clear, yet it so often occurs in you, that it is hard to judge whether it be art or nature. Now pray what do you mean by "mankind's being furnished with competent means?" If it be such means as any are prevailed on by to embrace the truth that must save them, preaching is a competent means; for by preaching alone, without force, many are prevailed on, and become truly Christians: and then your force, by your own confession, is not necessary. If by competent, you understand such means, by which all men are prevailed on, or the majority, to become truly Christians, I fear your force is no competent means.

Which way ever you put it, you must acknowledge mankind to be destitute of competent means, or your moderate force not to be that necessary competent means: since, whatever right the magistrates may have had any where to use it, wherever it has not been used, let the cause be what it will that kept this means from being used, there the people have been destitute of that means.

But you will think there is little reason to complain of obscurity, you having abundantly explained what you mean by competent, in saying competent, *i. e.* sufficient means. So that we have nothing to do but to find out what you mean by sufficient: and the meaning of that word, in your use of it, you happily give us in these following, "What does any man mean by sufficient

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evidence, but such as will certainly win assent wherever it is duly considered?" Apply this to your means, and then tell me, whether your force be such competent, *i. e.* sufficient means, that it certainly produced embracing the truth, wherever it was duly, *i. e.* your way applied; if it did not, it is plain it is not your competent, sufficient means, and so the world, without any such imputation to the divine wisdom and benignity, might be without it. If you will say it was sufficient, and did produce that end wherever it was applied, I desire you then to tell me whether mankind hath been always furnished with competent means. You have it now in your choice, either to talk impiously, or renounce force, and disown it to be competent means; one of the two I do not see how, by your own argument, you can avoid.

But to lay by your competent and sufficient means, and to ease you of the uncertainty and difficulty you will be in to determine what is so, in respect of mankind; I suppose it will be little less "impious to say, that the wise and benign Disposer and Governor hath not furnished mankind with necessary means, as to say he hath not furnished them with competent means." Now, sir, if your moderate penalties, and nothing else, be, since the withdrawing of miracles, this necessary means, what will be left you to say, by your argument, of the wisdom and benignity of God in all those countries where moderate penalties are not made use of? where men are not furnished with this means to bring them to the true religion? For unless you can say, that your moderate penalties have been constantly made use of in the world for the support and encouragement of the true religion, and to bring men to it, ever since the withdrawing of miracles; you must confess, that not only some countries, (which yet were enough against you) but mankind in general, have been unfurnished of the "necessary means for promoting the honour of God in the world, and the salvation of men's souls." This argument out of your own mouth, were there no other, is sufficient to show the weakness and unreasonableness of your scheme; and

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I hope the due consideration of it will make you cautious another time how you entitle the wisdom and benignity of God to the support of what you once fancy to be of great and necessary use.

I having thereupon said, "Let us not therefore be more wise than our Maker in that stupendous and supernatural work of our salvation. The Scripture," &c.

You reply, "Though the work of our salvation be, as I justly call it, stupendous and supernatural; yet you suppose no sober man doubts, but it both admits and ordinarily requires the use of natural and human means, in subordination to that grace which works it."

If you had taken notice of these immediately following words of mine, "The Scripture that reveals it to us, contains all that we can know or do, in order to it; and where that is silent, it is presumption in us to direct;" you would not have thought what you here say a sufficient answer: for though God does make use of natural and human means in subordination to grace, yet it is not for man to make use of any means, in subordination to his grace, which God has not appointed; out of a conceit it may do some service indirectly and at a distance.

The whole covenant and work of grace is the contrivance of God's infinite wisdom. What it is, and by what means he will dispense his grace, is known to us by revelation only; which is so little suited to human wisdom, that the apostle calls it "the foolishness of preaching." In the Scripture is contained all that revelation, and all things necessary for that work, all the means of grace; there God has declared all that he would have done for the salvation of souls; and if he had thought force necessary to be joined with the foolishness of preaching, no doubt but he would somewhere or other have revealed it, and not left it to the wisdom of man: which how disproportioned and opposite it is to the ways and wisdom of God in the Gospel, and how unfit to be trusted in the business of salvation, you may see, 1 Cor. i. from verse 17 to the end.

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"The work of grace admits, and ordinarily requires the use of natural and human means." I deny it not: let us now hear your inference: "Therefore till I have shown that no penal laws, that can be made, can do any service towards the salvation of men's souls in subordination to God's grace, or that God has forbidden the magistrate" to use force, for so you ought to put it, but you rather choose, according to your ordinary way, to use general and doubtful words; and therefore you say, "to serve him in that great work with the authority which he has given him, there will be no occasion for the caution I have given," not to be wiser than our Maker in that stupendous work of our salvation. By which way of arguing, any thing that I cannot show, cannot possibly, cannot indirectly and at a distance, or by accident, do any service, or God has not forbidden, may be made use of for the salvation of souls. I suppose you mean expressly forbidden; for else I might think these words ("Who has required this at your hands?") sufficient prohibition of it. The sum of your argument is, "what cannot be showed not to do any service, may be used as a human means in subordination to grace, in the work of salvation." To which I reply, That what may, through the grace of God, sometimes do some service, cannot, without a further warrant from revelation than such usefulness, be required, or made use of as a subordinate means to grace. For if so, then auricular confession, penance, pilgrimages, processions, &c. which nobody can show do not ever do any service, at least, indirectly and at a distance, towards the salvation of souls, may all be justified.

It is not enough that it cannot be shown that it cannot do any service to justify its usefulness; for what is there that may not, indirectly and at a distance, or by accident, do some service? To show that it is a human means, that God has nowhere appointed, in subordination to grace, in the supernatural work of salvation, is enough to prove it an unwarrantable boldness to use it: and much more so in the present case

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of force, which, if put into the magistrate's hands with power to use it in matters of religion, will do more harm than good, as I think I have sufficiently shown.

And therefore, since, according to you, the magistrate's commission to use force for the salvation of souls, is from the law of nature; which commission reaches to none, since the revelation of the Gospel, but Christian magistrates; it is more natural to conclude, were there nothing else in the case but the silence of Scripture, that the Christian magistrate has no such power, because he has no such commission any where in the Gospel, wherein all things are appointed necessary to salvation; than that there was so clear a commission given to all magistrates by the law of nature, that it is necessary to show a prohibition from revelation, if one will deny Christian magistrates to have that power. Since the commission of the law of nature to magistrates, being only that general one, of doing good, according to the best of their judgments: if that extends to the use of force in matters of religion, it will abundantly more oppose than promote the true religion; if force in the case has any efficacy at all, and so do more harm than good: which, though it shows not what you here demand, that it cannot do any service towards the salvation of men's souls, for that cannot be shown of any thing; yet it shows the disservice it does is so much more than any service can be expected from it, that it can never be proved that God has given power to magistrates to use it by the commission they have of doing good, from the law of nature.

But whilst you tell me, "Till I have shown that force and penalties cannot do any service towards the salvation of souls, there will be no occasion for the caution I gave you," not to be wiser than our Maker in that stupendous and supernatural work; you have forgot your own confession, that it is not enough to authorize the use of force, that it may be useful, if it be not also necessary. And when you can prove such means necessary, which though it cannot be shown, never upon any occasion to do any service; yet may be, and is abundantly shown to do little service, and so

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uncertainly, that if it be used, it will, if it has any efficacy, do more harm than good: if you can, I say, prove such a means as that necessary, I think I may yield to you the cause. But the use of it has so much certain harm, and so little and uncertain good in it, that it can never be supposed included or intended in the general commission to the magistrates, of doing good; which may serve for an answer to your next paragraph.

Only let me take notice, that you here make this commission of the law of nature to extend the use of force, only to "induce those, who would not otherwise, to hear what may and ought to move them to embrace the truth." They have heard all that is offered to move them to embrace, *i. e.* believe, but are not moved: is the magistrate by the law of nature commissioned to punish them for what is not in their power? for faith is the gift of God, and not in a man's power: or is the magistrate commissioned by the law of nature, which empowers him in general, only to do them good? Is he, I say, commissioned to make them lie, and profess that which they do not believe? And is this for their good? If he punish them till they embrace, *i. e.* believe, he punishes them for what is not in their power; if till they embrace, *i. e.* barely profess, he punishes them for what is not for their good: to neither of which can he be commissioned by the law of nature.

To my saying, "Till you can show us a commission in Scripture, it will be fit for us to obey that precept of the Gospel (Mark iv. 24) which bids us take heed what we hear:" you reply, That this, "you suppose, is only intended for the vulgar reader; for it ought to be rendered, attend to what you hear;" which you prove out of Grotius. What if I or my readers are not so learned as to understand either the Greek original, or Grotius's Latin comment? Or if we did, are we to be blamed for understanding the Scripture in that sense, which the national, *i. e.* as you say, the true religion authorizes, and which you tell us would be a fault in us if we did not believe?

For if, as you suppose, there be sufficient provision made in England for the instructing all men in the truth; we cannot then but take the words in this sense, it being

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that which the public authority has given them; for if we are not to follow the sense as it is given us in the translation authorized by our governors, and used in our worship established by law, but must seek it elsewhere, it will be hard to find how there is any other provision made for instructing men in the sense of the Scripture, which is the truth that must save them, but to leave them to their own inquiry and judgment, and to themselves, to take whom they think best for interpreters and expounders of Scripture, and to quit that of the true church, which she has given in her translation. This is the liberty you take to differ from the true church, when you think fit, and it will serve your purpose. She says, "Take heed what you hear;" but you say, the true sense is, "Attend to what you hear." Methinks you should not be at such variance with dissenters; for after all, *nothing is so like a non-conformist as a conformist.* Though it be certainly every one's right to understand the Scripture in that sense which appears truest to him, yet I do not see how you, upon your principles, can depart from that which the church of England has given it: but you, I find, when you think fit, take that liberty; and so much liberty as that would, I think, satisfy all the dissenters in England.

As to your other place of Scripture; if St. Paul, as it seems to me, in that tenth to the Romans, where showing that the Gentiles were provided with all things necessary to salvation, as well as the Jews,—and that by having men sent to them to preach the Gospel, that provision was made,—what you say in the two next paragraphs will show us that you understand that the Greek word ἀκοὴ signifies both hearing and report; but does no more answer the force of those two verses, against you, than if you had spared all you said with your Greek criticism. The words of St. Paul are these: "How then shall they call on him on whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? So then faith cometh by hearing, and

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hearing by the word of God," Rom. x. 14, 15, 17. In this deduction of the means of propagating the Gospel, we may well suppose St. Paul would have put in miracles or penalties, if, as you say, one of them had been necessary. But whether or no every reader will think St. Paul set down in that place all necessary means, I know not; but this, I am confident, he will think, that the New Testament does; and then I ask, Whether there be in it one word of force to be used to bring men to be Christians, or to hearken to the good tidings of salvation offered in the Gospel?

To my asking, "What if God, for reasons best known to himself, would not have men compelled?" You answer, "If he would not have them compelled, now miracles are ceased, as far as moderate penalties compel, (otherwise you are not concerned in the demand) he would have told us so." Concerning miracles supplying the want of force, I shall need to say nothing more here: but to your answer, that "God would have told us so," I shall in few words state the matter to you. You first suppose force necessary to compel men to hear; and thereupon suppose the magistrate invested with a power to compel them to hear; and from thence peremptorily declare, that if God would not have force used, he would have told us so. You suppose also, that it must be only moderate force. Now may we not ask one, that is so far of the council of the Almighty, that he can positively say what he would or would not have, to tell us, whether it be not as probable that God, who knows the temper of man that he has made, who knows how apt he is not to spare any degree of force when he believes he has a commission to compel men to do any thing in their power, and who knows also how prone man is to think it reasonable to do so; whether, I say, it is not as probable that God, if he would have the magistrate to use none but moderate force to compel men to hear, would also have told us so? Fathers are not more apt than magistrates to strain their power beyond what is convenient for the education of their children; and yet

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it has pleased God to tell them in the New Testament, of this moderation, by a precept more than once repeated.

To my demanding, "What if God would have men left to their freedom in this point, if they will hear, or if they will forbear; will you constrain them? Thus we are sure he did with his own people," &c. You answer, "But those words, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear, which we find thrice used in the prophet Ezekiel, are nothing at all to my purpose. For by hearing there, no man understands the bare giving an ear to what was to be preached, nor yet the considering it only; but the complying with it, and obeying it; according to the paraphrase which Grotius gives of the words." Methinks, for this once, you might have allowed me to have hit upon something to the purpose, you having denied me it in so many other places: if it were but for pity; and one other reason; which is, that all you have to say against it is, that "by hearing there, no man understands the bare giving an ear to what was to be preached, nor yet the considering it; but the complying with it, and obeying it." If I misremember not, your hypothesis pretends the use of force to be not barely to make men give an ear, nor yet to consider; but to make them consider as they ought, *i. e.* so as not to reject; and therefore, though this text out of Ezekiel be nothing to the purpose against bare giving an ear; yet, if you please, let it stand as if it were to the purpose against your hypothesis, till you can find some other answer to it.

If you will give yourself the pains to turn to Acts xxviii. 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, you will read these words: "And some believed the things that were spoken, and some believed not. And when they agreed not among themselves they departed, after that Paul had spoken one word, Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, saying, Go unto this people, and say, hearing, ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing, ye shall see, and not perceive. For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears

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are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it."

If one should come now, and out of your treatise, called The Argument of the Letter concerning Toleration considered and answered, reason thus, "It is evident that these Jews have not sought the truth in this matter with that application of mind and freedom of judgment which was requisite; whilst they suffered their lusts and passions to sit in judgment, and manage the inquiry. The impressions of education, the reverence and admiration of persons, worldly respects, and the like incompetent motives, have determined them. Now if this be the case,—if these men are averse to a due consideration of things, where they are most concerned to use it,—*what means is there left* (besides the grace of God) to reduce them out of the wrong way they are in, but to lay thorns and briars in it?" Would you not think this a good argument to show the necessity of using force and penalties upon these men in the Acts, who refused to be brought to embrace the true religion upon the preaching of St. Paul? "For what other means was left, what human method could be used to bring them to make a wiser and more rational choice, but laying such penalties upon them as might balance the weight of such prejudices, which inclined them to prefer a false way before the true?" Tell me, I beseech you, would you not, had you been a Christian magistrate in those days, have thought yourself obliged to try, by force, "to overbalance the weight of those prejudices which inclined them to prefer a false way to the true?" For there was no other human means left; and if that be not enough to prove the necessity of using it, you have no proof of any necessity of force at all.

If you would have laid penalties upon them, I ask you, what if God, for reasons best known to himself,

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thought it not necessary to use any other human means but preaching and persuasion? You have a ready answer, there is no other human means but force, and some other human means besides preaching is necessary, *i. e.* in your opinion: and is it not fit your authority should carry it? For as to miracles, whether you think fit to rank them amongst human means or no; or whether or no there were any showed to these unbelieving Jews, to supply the want of force; I guess, in this case, you will not be much helped, whichever you suppose: though to one unbiassed, who reads that chapter, it will, I imagine, appear most probable that St. Paul, when he thus parted with them, had done no miracles amongst them.

But you have, at the close of the paragraph before us, provided a salvo for all, in telling us, "However the penalties you defend are not such as can any way be pretended to take away men's freedom in this point." The question is, whether there be a necessity of using other human means but preaching, for the bringing men to embrace the truth that must save them; and whether force be it? God himself seems, in the places quoted, and others, to teach us, that he would have left men to their freedom from any constraint of force in that point; and you answer, "The penalties you defend are not such as can any ways be pretended to take away men's freedom in this point." Tell us what you mean by these words of yours, "take away men's freedom in this point;" and then apply it. I think it pretty hard to use penalties and force to any man, without taking away his freedom from penalties and force. Farther, the penalties you think necessary, if we may believe you yourself, are to "be such as may balance the weight of those prejudices, which incline men to prefer a false way before a true:" whether these be such as you will defend, is another question. This, I think, is to be made plain, that you must go beyond the lower degrees of force, and moderate penalties, to balance those prejudices.

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To my saying, "That the method of the Gospel is to pray and beseech, and that if God had thought it necessary to have men punished to make them give ear, he could have called magistrates to be spreaders of the Gospel, as well as poor fishermen, or Paul a persecutor, who yet wanted not power to punish Ananias and Sapphira, and the incestuous Corinthian:" you reply, "Though it be the method of the Gospel, for the ministers of it to pray and beseech men; yet it appears from my own words here, both that punishments may be sometimes necessary; and that punishing, and that even by those who are to pray and beseech, is consistent with that method." I fear, sir, you so greedily lay hold upon any examples of punishment, when on any account they come in your way, that you give yourself not liberty to consider whether they are for your purpose or no; or else you would scarce infer, as you do from my words, that, in your case, "punishments may be sometimes necessary." Ananias and Sapphira were punished: "therefore it appears," say you, "that punishments may be sometimes necessary." For what, I beseech you? For the only end, you say, punishments are useful in religion, *i. e.* to make men consider. So that Ananias and Sapphira were struck dead: for what end? To make them consider. If you had given yourself the leisure to have reflected on this, and the other instance of the incestuous Corinthian, it is possible you would have found neither of them to have served very well to show punishment necessary to bring men to embrace the true religion; for both these were punishments laid on those who had already embraced the true religion, and were in the communion of the true church; and so can only show, if you will infer any thing concerning the necessity of punishments from them, that punishments may be sometimes necessary for those who are in the communion of the true church. And of that you may make your advantage.

As to your other inferences from my words, viz. "That punishing, and that even by those who are, as ambassadors, to pray and beseech, is consistent with

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that method;" when they can do it as the apostles did, by the immediate direction and assistance of the Spirit of God, I shall easily allow it to be consistent with the method of the Gospel. If that will not content you, it is plain, you have an itch to be handling the secular sword; and since Christ has not given you the power you desire, you would be executing the magistrate's pretended commission from the law of nature. One thing more let me mind you of, and that is, that if, from the punishments of Ananias and Sapphira, and the incestuous Corinthian, you can infer a necessity of punishment to make men consider; it will follow that there was a necessity of punishment to make men consider, notwithstanding miracles, which cannot therefore be supposed to supply the want of punishments.

To my asking, "What if God, foreseeing this force would be in the hands of men as passionate, as humorsome, as liable to prejudice and error, as the rest of their brethren, did not think it a proper means to bring men into the right way?" You reply, "But if there be any thing of an argument in this, it proves that there ought to be no civil government in the world; and so proving too much, proves nothing at all." This you say; but you being one of those mortals who is liable to error as well as your brethren, you cannot expect it should be received for infallible truth, till you have proved it; and that you will never do, till you can show, that there is as absolute a necessity of force in the magistrate's hands for the salvation of souls, as there is of force in the magistrate's hands for the preservation of civil society; and next, till you have proved that force, in the hands of men as passionate and humorsome, or liable to prejudice and error as their brethren, would contribute as much to the bringing men, and keeping them in the right way to salvation, as it does to the support of civil society, and the keeping men at peace in it.

Where men cannot live together without mutual injuries, not to be avoided without force, reason has taught them to seek a remedy in government; which always places power somewhere in the society to restrain

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and punish such injuries; which power, whether placed in the community itself, or some chosen by the community to govern it, must still be in the hands of men; and where, as in societies of civilized and settled nations, the form of the government places this power out of the community itself, it is unavoidable, that out of men, such as they are, some should be made magistrates, and have coercive power of force put into their hands, to govern and direct the society for the public good; without which force, so placed in the hands of men, there could be no civil society, nor the ends for which it is instituted to any degree attained. And thus government is the will of God.

It is the will of God also, that men should be saved; but to this it is not necessary that force or coactive power should be put into men's hands, because God can and hath provided other means to bring men to salvation: to which you indeed suppose, but can never prove force necessary.

The passions, humours, liableness to prejudices and errors, common to magistrates with other men, do not render force in their hands so dangerous and unuseful to the ends of society, which is the public peace, as to the ends of religion, which is the salvation of men's souls. For though men of all ranks could be content to have their own humours, passions, and prejudices satisfied; yet when they come to make laws, which are to direct their force in civil matters, they are driven to oppose their laws to the humours, passions, and prejudices of men in general, whereby their own come to be restrained: for if law-makers, in making of laws, did not direct them against the irregular humours, prejudices, and passions of men, which are apt to mislead them; if they did not endeavour, with their best judgment, to bring men from their humours and passions, to the obedience and practice of right reason; the society could not subsist, and so they themselves would be in danger to lose their station in it, and be exposed to the unrestrained humours, passions, and violence of others. And hence it comes, that be men as humorsome, passionate, and prejudiced as they will, they are still by their own

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interest obliged to make use of their best skill, and with their most unprejudiced and sedatest thoughts, take care of the government, and endeavour to preserve the commonwealth; and therefore, notwithstanding their humours and passions, their liableness to error and prejudice, they do provide pretty well for the support of society, and the power in their hands is of use to the maintenance of it.

But in matters of religion it is quite otherwise; you had told us, about the latter end of your Argument, p. 22, how liable men were in choosing their religion to be misled by humour, passion, and prejudice; and therefore it was not fit that in a business of such concernment they should be left to themselves: and hence, in this matter of religion, you would have them subjected to the coactive power of the magistrate. But this contrivance is visibly of no advantage to the true religion, nor can serve at all to secure men from a wrong choice. For the magistrates, by their humours, prejudices, and passions, which they are born to like other men, being as liable and likely to be misled in the choice of their religion as any of their brethren, as constant experience hath always shown; what advantage could it be to mankind, for the salvation of their souls, that the magistrates of the world should have power to use force to bring men to that religion which they, each of them, by whatsoever humour, passion, or prejudice influenced, had chosen to themselves as the true? For whatsoever you did, I think with reverence we may say, that God foresaw, that whatever commission one magistrate had by the law of nature, all magistrates had; and that commission, if there were any such, could be only to use their coactive power to bring men to the religion they believed to be true, whether it were really the true or no; and therefore I shall, without taking away government out of the world, or so much as questioning it, still think this a reasonable question: "What if God, foreseeing this force would be in the hands of men as passionate, as humoursome, as liable to prejudice and error, as the rest of their brethren; did not think it a proper means, in such hands, to bring

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men into the right way?' and that it needs a better answer than you have given to it: and therefore you might have spared the pains you have taken in this paragraph, to prove that the magistrate's being liable as much as other men to humour, prejudice, passion, and error, makes not force, in his hands, wholly unserviceable to the administration of civil government; which is what nobody denies: and you would have better employed it to prove, that if the magistrate's being as liable to passion, humour, prejudice, and error, as other men, made force, in his hands, improper to bring men to the true religion; this would take away government out of the world: which is a consequence, I think, I may deny.

To which let me now add, what if God foresaw, that if force, of any kind or degree whatsoever, were allowed in behalf of truth, it would be used by erring, passionate, prejudiced men, to the restraint and ruin of truth,—as constant experience in all ages has shown,—and therefore commanded that the tares should be suffered to grow with the wheat, till the harvest, when the infallible Judge shall sever them? That parable of our Saviour's plainly tells us, if force were once permitted, even in favour of the true religion, what mischief it was like to do in the misapplication of it, by forward, busy, mistaken men, and therefore he wholly forbid it; and yet, I hope, this does not take away civil government out of the world.

To my demanding, "What if there be other means?" and saying, "Then yours ceases to be necessary upon that account, that there is no other means left; for the grace of God is another means:" you answer, That "though the grace of God is another means, yet it is none of the means of which you were speaking in the place I refer to; which any one, who reads that paragraph, will find to be only human means." In that place you were endeavouring to prove force necessary to bring men to the true religion, as appears; and there having dilated for four or five pages together upon the "carelessness, prejudices, passions, lusts, impressions of education, worldly respects," and other

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the like causes, which you think mislead and keep men from the true religion; you at last conclude force necessary to bring men to it, because admonitions and entreaties not prevailing, there is no other means left. To this, grace being instanced in as another means, you tell us here you mean no other human means left. So that, to prove force necessary, you must prove that God would have other human means used besides praying, preaching, persuasion, and instruction; and for this, you will need to bring a plain direction from revelation for your moderate punishments; unless you will pretend to know, by your own natural wisdom, what means God has made necessary; without which, those whom he hath foreknown and predestinated, and will in his good time call, Romans viii. 29, by such means as he thinks fit, according to his purpose, cannot be brought into the way of salvation. Perhaps you have some warrant we know not of, to enter thus boldly into the counsel of God; without which, in another man, a modest Christian would be apt to think it presumption.

You say, there are many who are not prevailed on by prayers, entreaties, and exhortations, to embrace the true religion. What then is to be done? "Some degrees of force are necessary" to be used. Why? Because there is no other human means left. Many are not prevailed on by your moderate force. What then is to be done? Greater degrees of force are necessary, because there is no other human means left. No, say you, God has made moderate force necessary, because there is no other human means left where preaching and entreaties will not prevail; but he has not made greater degrees of force necessary, because there is no other human means left where moderate force will not prevail. So that your rule changing, where the reason continues the same, we must conclude you have some way of judging concerning the purposes and ways of the Almighty in the work of salvation, which every one understands not. You would not else, upon so slight ground as you have yet produced for it, which is nothing but your own imagination, make force, your moderate force, so necessary, that you bring in question the wisdom and

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bounty of the Disposer and Governor of all things, as if he "had not furnished mankind with competent means for the promoting his own honour in the world, and the good of souls," if your moderate force were wanting to bring them to the true religion; whereas you know that most of the nations of the world always were destitute of this human means to bring them to the true religion. And I imagine you would be put to it, to name me one now, that is furnished with it.

Besides, if you please to remember what you say in the next words: "And therefore, though the grace of God be both a proper and sufficient means, and such as can work by itself, and without which neither penalties nor any other means can do any thing," and by consequence can make any means effectual; how can you say any human means, in this supernatural work, unless what God has declared to be so, is necessary? Preaching, and instruction, and exhortation, are human means that he has appointed: these, therefore, men may and ought to use; they have a commission from God, and may expect his blessing and the assistance of his grace; but to suppose, when they are used and prevail not, that force is necessary, because these are not sufficient, is to exclude grace, and ascribe this work to human means; as in effect you do, when you call force competent and sufficient means, as you have done. For if bare preaching, by the assistance of grace, can and will certainly prevail: and moderate penalties, as you confess, or any kind of force, without the assistance of grace, can do nothing; how can you say, that force is in any case a more necessary or a more competent or sufficient means than bare preaching and instruction; unless you can show us, that God hath promised the co-operation and assistance of his grace to force, and not to preaching? The contrary whereof has more of appearance. Preaching and persuasion are not competent means, you say: Why? because without the co-operation of grace they can do nothing: but by the assistance of grace they can prevail even without force. Force too, without grace, you acknowledge can do nothing; but, joined with preaching and grace, it can prevail. Why then, I

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pray, is it a more competent means than preaching; or why necessary, where preaching prevails not? since it can do nothing without that, which, if joined to preaching, can make preaching effectual without it.

You go on, "Yet it may be true however, that when admonitions and entreaties fail, there is no *human* means left but penalties, to bring prejudiced persons to hear and consider what may convince them of their errors, and discover the truth to them: and then penalties will be necessary in respect to that end, as an *human* means." Let it be true or not true, that when entreaties, &c. fail, there is no *human* means left but penalties: your inference I deny, that then penalties will be necessary as an *human* means. For I ask you, since you lay so much stress to so little purpose on *human* means, is some human means necessary? if that be your meaning, you have human means in the case, viz. admonitions, entreaties; being instant in season and out of season. I ask you again, Are penalties necessary because the end could not be obtained by preaching, without them? that you cannot say; for grace co-operating with preaching will prevail. Are penalties then necessary, as sure to produce that end? nor so are they necessary; for without the assistance of grace, you confess, they can do nothing. So that penalties, neither as human means, nor as any means, are at all necessary. And now you may understand what I intend, by saying that the grace of God is the only means, which is the inquiry of your next paragraph, viz. this I intend, that it is the only efficacious means, without which all human means is ineffectual. You tell me, If by it "I intend that it does either always, or ordinarily exclude all other means; you see no ground I have to say it." And I see no ground you have to think I intended, that it excludes any other means that God in his goodness will be pleased to make use of: but this I intend by it, and this, I think, I have ground to say, that it excludes all the human means of force from being necessary, or so much as lawful to be used; unless God hath required it by some more authentic declaration than your bare saying or imagining it is necessary.

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And you must have more than human confidence, if you continue to mix this poor and human contrivance of yours with the wisdom and counsel of God in the work of salvation; since he having declared the means and methods to be used for the saving men's souls, has in the revelation of the Gospel, by your own confession, prescribed no such human means.

To my saying, "God alone can open the ear that it may hear, and open the heart that it may understand:" you reply, "But, by your favour, this does not prove that he makes use of no means in doing of it." Nor needs it: it is enough for me, if it proves, that if preaching and instruction do not open the ear, or the heart, it is not necessary any one should try his strength with a hammer or an augre. Man is not in this business, (where no means can be effectual, without the assistance and co-operation of his grace) to make use of any means which God hath not prescribed. You here set up a way of propagating Christianity according to your fancy, and tell us how you would have the work of the Gospel carried on: you commission the magistrate by the argument of congruity; you find an efficacy in punishment towards the converting of men; you limit the force to be used to low and moderate degrees, and to countries where sufficient means of instruction are provided by the law, and where the magistrate's religion is the true, *i. e.* where it pleases you; and all this without any direction from God, or any authority so much as pretended from the Gospel; and without its being truly for the propagation of Christianity, but only so much of it as you think fit, and what else you are pleased to join to it. Why else, in the religion you are content to have established by law, and promoted by penalties, is any thing more or less required than is expressly contained in the New Testament?

This indeed is well suited to any one, who would have a power of punishing those that differ from his opinion, and would have men compelled to conformity in England. But in this your fair contrivance, what becomes of the rest of mankind, left to wander in darkness out of

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this Goshen, who neither have, nor (according to your scheme) can have, your necessary means of force and penalties to bring them to embrace the truth that must save them? for if that be necessary, they cannot without a miracle, either prince or people, be wrought on without it. If a papist at Rome, a Lutheran at Stockholm, or a Calvinist at Geneva, should argue thus for his church, would you not say, that such as these looked like the thoughts of a poor prejudiced mind? But they may mistake, and you cannot; they may be prejudiced, but you cannot. Say too, if you please, you are confident you are in the right, but they cannot be confident they are so. This I am sure, God's thoughts are not as man's thoughts, nor his ways as man's ways, Isaiah lv. 8. And it may abate any one's confidence of the necessity or use of punishments, for not receiving our Saviour, or his religion, when those who had the power of miracles were told, that "they knew not what manner of spirit they were of," when they would have commanded down fire from heaven, Luke ix. 55. But you do well to take care to have the church you are of supported by force and penalties, whatever becomes of the propagation of the Gospel, or the salvation of men's souls, in other parts of the world, as not coming within your hypothesis.

In your next paragraph, to prove that God does bless the use of force, you say you suppose I mean, by the words you there cite, that the "magistrate has no ground to hope that God will bless any penalties that he may use to bring men to hear and consider the doctrine of salvation; or (which is the same thing) that God does not (at least not ordinarily) afford his grace and assistance to them who are brought by such penalties to hear and consider that doctrine, to enable them to hear and consider it as they ought, *i. e.* so as to be moved heartily to embrace it." You tell me, "If this be my meaning, then to let me see that it is not true, you shall only desire me to tell you, whether they that are so brought to hear and consider, are bound to believe the Gospel or not? If I say they are; (and you suppose I dare not say otherwise) then it evidently fol-

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lows, that God does afford them that grace which is requisite to enable them to believe the Gospel: because without that grace it is impossible for them to believe it; and they cannot be bound to believe what it is impossible for them to believe." To which I shall only answer, that by this irrefragable argument it is evident, that wherever due penalties have been used,—for those you tell us are sufficient and competent means to make men hear and consider as they ought,—there all men were brought to believe the Gospel: which, whether you will resolve with yourself to be true or false, will be to me indifferent, and on either hand equally advantage your cause. Had you appealed to experience for the success of the use of force by the magistrate, your argument had not shown half so much depth of theological learning: but the mischief is, that if you will not make it all of a piece scholastic; and by arguing that all whom the magistrates use force upon "are brought to consider as they ought, and to all that are so wrought upon God does afford that grace which is requisite;" and so roundly conclude for a greater success of force, to make men believe the Gospel, than ever our Saviour and the Apostles had by their preaching and miracles; for that wrought not on all; your unanswerable argument comes to nothing. And in truth, as you have in this paragraph ordered the matter, by being too sparing of your abstract metaphysical reasoning, and employing it by halves, we are fain, after all, to come to the dull way of experience; and must be forced to count, as the parson does his communicants, by his Easter-book, how many those are so brought to hear and consider, to know how far God blesses penalties. Indeed, were it to be measured by conforming, the Easter-book would be a good register to determine it: but since you put it upon believing, that will be of somewhat a harder disquisition.

To my saying, (upon that place out of Isaiah, vi. 10, "Make the heart of this people fat, lest they understand, and convert, and be healed) will all the force you can use be a means to make such people hear and understand, and be converted?" You reply,

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No, sir, it will not. But what then? What if God declares that he will not heal those who have long resisted all his ordinary methods, and made themselves, morally speaking, incurable by them? (which is the utmost, you say, I can make of the words I quote). Will it follow from thence, that no good can be done by penalties upon others, who are not so far gone in wickedness and obstinacy? If it will not, as it is evident it will not, to what purpose is this said?" It is said to this purpose, viz. to show that force ought not to be used at all. Those ordinary methods which, resisted, are punished with a reprobate sense, are the ordinary methods of instruction, without force; as is evident from this place and many others, particularly Romans i. From whence I argue, that what state soever you will suppose men in, either as past, or not yet come to the day of grace, nobody can be justified in using force to work upon them. For till the ordinary methods of instruction and persuasion can do no more, force is not necessary; for you cannot say what other means is there left, and so by your own rule not lawful. For till God hath pronounced this sentence here, on any one, "make his heart fat," &c. the ordinary means of instruction and persuasion may, by the assistance of God's grace, prevail. And when this sentence is once passed upon them, and "God will not afford them his grace to heal them," (I take it, you confess in this place) I am sure you must confess your force to be wholly useless, and so utterly impertinent; unless that can be pertinent to be used, which you own can do nothing. So that whether it will follow or no, from men's being given up to a reprobate mind, for having resisted the preaching of salvation, "that no good can be done by penalties upon others;" this will follow, that not knowing whether preaching may not, by the grace of God, yet work upon them; or whether the day of grace be past with them; neither you nor any body else can say that force is necessary; and if it be not necessary, you yourself tell us it is not to be used.

In your next paragraph, you complain of me, as re-

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presenting your argument, as you say "I commonly do, as if you allowed any magistrate, of what religion soever, to lay penalties upon all that dissent from him." Unhappy magistrates that have not your allowance! But to console them, I imagine they will find that they are all under the same obligation, one as another, to propagate the religion they believe to be the true, whether you allow it them or no. For to go no farther than the first words of your argument, which you complain I have misrepresented, and which you tell me runs thus, "When men fly from the means of right information;" I ask you here, who shall be judge of those means of right information; the magistrate who joins force with them to make them be hearkened to, or no? When you have answered that, you will have resolved a great part of the question, what magistrates are to use force?

But that you may not complain again of my misrepresenting, I must beg my readers' leave to set down your argument at large in your own words, and all you say upon it: "When men fly from the means of a right information, and will not so much as consider how reasonable it is thoroughly and impartially to examine a religion, which they embraced upon such inducements as ought to have no sway at all in the matter, and therefore with little or no examination of the proper grounds of it; what human method can be used to bring them to act like men in an affair of such consequence, and to make a wiser and more rational choice, but that of laying such penalties upon them, as may balance the weight of those prejudices, which inclined them to prefer a false way before the true?" &c. Now this argument, you tell me, I pretend to retort in this manner: "and I say, I see no other means left, (taking the world as we now find it, wherein the magistrate never lays penalties for matters of religion upon those of his own church, nor is it to be expected they ever should) to make men of the national church, any where, thoroughly and impartially examine a religion, which they embraced upon such

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inducements as ought to have no sway at all in the matter, and therefore with little or no examination of the proper grounds of it: and therefore I conclude the use of force by dissenters upon conformists necessary. I appeal to all the world, whether this be not as just and natural a conclusion as yours?" And you say you are "well content the world should judge. And when it determinest hat there is the same reason to say, that to bring those who conform to the national church to examine their religion, it is necessary for dissenters (who cannot possibly have the coactive power, because the national church has that on its side, and cannot be national without it) to use force upon conformists; as there is to say, that where the national church is the true church, there to bring dissenters (as I call them) to examine their religion, it is necessary for the magistrate (who has the coactive power) to lay moderate penalties upon them for dissenting: you say, when the world determines thus, you will never pretend any more to judge what is reasonable, in any case whatsoever. For you doubt not but you may safely presume, that the world will easily admit these two things. 1. That though it be very fit and desirable, that all that are of the true religion should understand the true grounds of it, that so they may be the better able both to defend themselves against the assaults of seducers, and to reduce such as are out of the way; yet this is not strictly necessary to their salvation: because experience shows (as far as men are capable to judge of such matters) that many do heartily believe and profess the true religion, and conscientiously practise the duties of it, who yet do not understand the true grounds upon which it challenges their belief; and no man doubts, but whosoever does so believe, profess, and practise the true religion, if he perseveres to the end, shall certainly attain salvation by it. 2. That how much soever it concerns those who reject the true religion (whom I may call dissenters if I please) to examine and consider why they do so; and how needful soever penalties may be to bring them to this; it is, however, utterly unreasonable, that

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such as have not the coactive power should take upon them to inflict penalties for that purpose: because, as that is not consistent with order and government, which cannot stand where private persons are permitted to usurp the coactive power; so there is nothing more manifest, than that the prejudice which is done to religion, and to the interest of men's souls, by destroying government, does infinitely outweigh any good that can possibly be done by that which destroys it. And whoever admits and considers these things, you say, you are very secure will be far enough from admitting, that there is any parity of reason in the cases we here speak of, or that mine is as just and natural a conclusion as yours."

The sum of what you say amounts to thus much: men being apt to take up their religion upon inducements that ought to have no sway at all in the matter, and so, with little or no examination of the grounds of it; therefore penalties are necessary to be laid on them, to make them thoroughly and impartially examine. But yet penalties need not be laid on conformists, in England, to make them examine; because they, and you, believe yours to be the true religion: though it must be laid on presbyterians and independents, &c. to make them examine, though they believe theirs to be the true religion, because you believe it not to be so. But you give another very substantial reason, why penalties cannot be laid on conformists, to make them examine; and that is, "because the national church has the coactive power on its side," and therefore they have no need of penalties to make them examine. The national church of France, too, has the coactive power on its side, and therefore they who are of it have no need of penalties, any of them, to make them examine.

If your argument be good, that men take up their religion upon wrong inducements, and without due examination of the proper grounds of it; and that therefore they have need of penalties to be laid on them to make them examine, as they ought, the grounds of their religion; you must confess there are some in the

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church of England, to whom penalties are necessary: unless you will affirm, that all, who are in the communion of the church of England, have so examined: but that I think you will not do, however you endeavour to palliate their ignorance and negligence in this matter. There being therefore a need of penalties, I say, it is as necessary that presbyterians should lay penalties on the conformists of the church of England to make them examine, as for the church of England to lay penalties on the presbyterians to make them do so: for they each equally believe their religion to be true; and we suppose, on both sides, there are those who have not duly examined. But here you think you have a sure advantage, by saying it is not consistent with the "order of government, and so it is impracticable." I easily grant it. But is yours more practicable? When you can make your way practicable, for the end for which you pretend it necessary, viz. to make "all, who have taken up their religion upon such inducements as ought to have no sway at all in the matter, to examine thoroughly and impartially the proper grounds of it;" when, I say, you can show your way practicable, to this end, you will have cleared it of one main objection, and convinced the world that yours is a more just and natural conclusion than mine.

If your cause were capable of any other defence, I suppose we should not have had so long and elaborate an answer as you have given us in this paragraph, which at last bottoms only on these two things: 1. That there are in you, or those of your church, some approaches towards infallibility in your belief that your religion is true, which is not to be allowed those of other churches, in the belief of theirs. 2. That it is enough if any one does but conform to it, and remain in the communion of your church: or else one would think there should be as much need for conformists too of your church to examine the grounds of their religion, as for any others.

"To understand the true grounds of the true religion is not, you say, strictly necessary to salvation." Yet, I think, you will not deny but it is as strictly necessary

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to salvation, as it is to conform to a national church in all those things it imposes: some whereof are not necessary to salvation; some whereof are acknowledged by all to be indifferent; and some whereof, to some conscientious men, who thereupon decline communion, appear unsound or unlawful. If not being strictly necessary to salvation, will excuse from penalties in the one case, why will it not in the other? And now I shall excuse the world from determining my conclusion to be as natural as yours: for it is pity so reasonable a disputant as you are, should take so desperate a resolution as "never to pretend any more to judge what is reasonable in any case whatsoever."

Whether you have proved that force, used by the magistrate, be a means prescribed by God to procure the gift of faith from him, which is all you say in the next paragraph, others must judge.

In that following, you quote these words of mine: "If all the means God has appointed to make men hear and consider, be exhortation in season and out of season, &c. together with prayer for them, and the example of meekness, and a good life; this is all ought to be done, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear." To which you thus reply, "But if these be not all the means God has appointed, then these things are not all that ought to be done." But if I ask you, How do you know that this is not all God has appointed; you have nothing to answer, to bring it to your present purpose, but that you know it by the light of nature. For all you say is but this, that by the light of nature you know force to be useful and necessary to bring men into the way of salvation; by the light of nature you know the magistrate has a commission to use force to that purpose; and by the same light of nature, you know that miracles were appointed to supply the want of force till the magistrates were Christians. I imagine, sir, you would scarce have thought this a reasonable answer, if you had taken notice of my words in the same paragraph immediately preceding those you have cited; which, that you may see the scope of my argument, I will here trouble you

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again; and they are these: "It is not for you and me, out of an imagination that they may be useful, or are necessary, to prescribe means in the great and mysterious work of salvation, other than what God himself has directed. God has appointed force as useful and necessary, and therefore it is to be used; is a way of arguing becoming the ignorance and humility of poor creatures. But I think force useful or necessary, and therefore it is to be used; has methinks a little too much presumption in it. You ask what means else is there left? None, say I, to be used by man, but what God himself has directed in the Scriptures, wherein are contained all the means and methods of salvation. Faith is the gift of God. And we are not to use any other means to procure this gift to any one, but what God himself has prescribed. If he has there appointed, that any should be forced to hear those who tell them they have mistaken their way, and offer to show them the right; and that they should be punished by the magistrate, if they did not; it will be past doubt, it is to be made use of. But till that can be done, it will be in vain to say, what other means is there left."

My argument here lies plainly in this: That all the means and methods of salvation are contained in the Scripture: which either you were to have denied, or else have shown where it was in Scripture that force was appointed. But instead of that, you tell us, that God appointed miracles in the beginning of the Gospel. And though, when these ceased, the means I mention were all the ministers had left, yet this proves not that the magistrate was not to use force. Your words are, "As to the first spreaders of the Gospel, it has already been shown, that God appointed other means besides these for them to use, to induce men to hear and consider: and though, when those extraordinary means ceased, these means which I mention (viz. preaching, &c.) were the only means left to the ministers of the Gospel; yet that is no proof that the magistrate, when he became Christian, could not lawfully use such means as his station enabled him to use, when

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they became needful." I said, in express words, "No means was to be used by man, but what God himself has directed in the Scripture." And you answer, This is no proof that the Christian magistrate may not use force. Perhaps when they so peremptorily interpose their decisive decrees in the business of salvation, establish religions by laws and penalties, with what articles, creeds, ceremonies, and discipline, they think fit; (for this we see done almost in all countries) when they force men to hear those, and those only, who by their authority are chosen and allowed to tell men they have mistaken their way, and offer to show them the right; it may be thought necessary to prove magistrates to be men. If that needs no proof, what I said needs some other answer.

But let us examine a little the parts of what you here say: "As to the first spreaders of the Gospel, say you, it has already been shown, that God appointed other means besides exhortation in season and out of season, prayer, and the example of a good life, for them to use to induce men to hear and consider." What were those other means? To that you answer readily, miracles. *Ergo*, men are directed now by Scripture to use miracles. Or else what answer do you make to my argument, which I gave you in these words, "No means is to be used by man, but what God himself has directed in the Scriptures, wherein are contained all the means and methods of salvation." No, they cannot use miracles now as a means, say you, for they have them not. What then? Therefore the magistrate, who has it, must use force to supply the want of those extraordinary means which are now ceased. This indeed is an inference of yours, but not of the Scriptures. Does the Scripture say any thing of this? Not a word; not so much as the least intimation towards it in all the New Testament. Be it then true or false, that force is a means to be used by men in the absence of miracles; this is yet no answer to my argument; this is no proof that it is appointed in Scripture; which is the thing my argument turns on.

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Revelation then fails you. Let us see now how reason and common sense, that common light of nature, will help you out.

You then reason thus: bare preaching, &c. will not prevail on men to hear and consider; and therefore some other means is necessary to make them do so. Pray what do you mean by men, or any other of those indefinite terms, you have always used in this case? Is it that bare preaching will prevail on no men? Does reason, (under which I comprehend experience too, and all the ways of knowledge, contradistinguished to revelation) discover any such thing to you? I imagine you will not say that; or pretend that nobody was ever brought, by preaching or persuasion, to hear and consider the truths of the Gospel, (mean by considering what you will) without other means used by those who applied themselves to the care of converting them. To such therefore as may be brought to hear and consider, without other means, you will not say that other means are necessary.

In the next place, therefore, When you say bare preaching will not prevail on men, do you mean that it will not prevail on all men, and therefore it is necessary that men should use other means? Neither, I think, will reason authorize you to draw such a consequence: because neither will preaching alone, nor preaching assisted with force, or any other means man can use, prevail on all men. And therefore no other means can be pretended to be necessary to be used by man, to do what men by those means never did, nor ever can do.

That some men shall be saved, and not all, is, I think, past question to all that are Christians: and those that shall be saved, it is plain, are the elect. If you think not this plain enough in Scripture, I desire you to turn to the seventeenth of the XXXIX articles of the church of England, where you will read these words: "Predestination to life is the everlasting purpose of God, whereby (before the foundations of the world were laid) he hath constantly decreed by his counsel secret to us, to deliver from curse and damnation those whom he has chosen in Christ out of man-

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kind, and to bring them by Christ to everlasting salvation, as vessels made to honour. Wherefore they which be indued with so excellent a benefit of God, be called according to God's purpose by his Spirit working in due season: they through grace obey the calling; they be justified freely; they be made sons of God by adoption; they be made like the image of his only begotten Son Jesus Christ; they walk religiously in good works; and at length, by God's mercy, they attain to everlasting felicity." Now pray tell me whether bare preaching will not prevail on all the elect to hear and consider without other means to be used by men. If you say it will, the necessity of your other means, I think, is out of doors. If you say it will not, I desire you to tell me how you do know it without revelation? And whether by your own reason you can tell us, whether any, and what means God has made necessary, besides what he has appointed in Scripture for the calling his elect? When you can do this, we shall think you no ordinary divine, nor a stranger to the secret counsels of the infinitely wise God. But till then, your mixing your opinion with the divine wisdom in the great work of salvation, and, from arguments of congruity, taking upon you to declare the necessity or usefulness of means, which God has not expressly directed, for the gathering in of his elect; will scarce authorize the magistrate to use his coactive power for the edifying and completing the body of Christ, which is his church. "Those whom God hath chosen in Christ out of mankind, before the foundations of the world, are called, according to God's purpose, by his Spirit, working in due season, and through grace obey the calling," say you in your article. The outward means that God has appointed for this, is preaching. Ay, but preaching is not enough; that is, is not sufficient means, say you. And I ask you how you know it; since the Scripture, which declares all that we can know in this matter, says nothing of the insufficiency of it, or of the necessity of any other? Nor can there be a necessity of any other means than what God expressly appoints, in a matter wherein no means can operate ef-

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fectually, without the assistance of his grace; and where the assistance of his grace can make any outward means he appoints effectual.

I must desire you here to take notice, that by preaching, which I use for shortness, I mean exhortation, instruction, entreaty, praying for; and, in fine, any outward means of persuasion in the power of man, separate from force.

You tell us here, "as to the first spreaders of the Gospel, God appointed other means, viz. miracles, for them to use to induce men to hear and consider." If by the first spreaders of the Gospel, you mean the twelve apostles and seventy disciples, whom Christ himself sent to preach the Gospel; they indeed were appointed, by his immediate command, to show miracles by the power which he had bestowed upon them. But will you say, all the ministers and preachers of the Gospel had such a commission, and such a power, all along from the apostles' time; and that they, every one, did actually show miracles, to induce men to hear and consider, quite down till Christianity was supported by the law of the empire? Unless you could show this, though you could produce some well-attested miracles, done by some men in every age till that time; yet it would not be sufficient to prove that miracles were appointed to be constantly used to induce men to hear and consider; and so, by your reasoning, to supply the want of force, till that necessary assistance could be had from the authority of the magistrate become Christian. For since it is what you build upon, that men will not hear and consider upon bare preaching; and I think you will forwardly enough agree, that till Christianity was made the religion of the empire, there were those every where that heard the preachers of it so little, or so little considered what they said, that they rejected the Gospel; and that therefore miracles or force are necessary means to make men hear and consider; you must own that those who preached without the power of miracles, or the coactive power of the magistrate accompanying them, were unfurnished of competent and sufficient means to make men hear and consider; and so to bring them to

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the true religion. If you will say the miracles done by others were enough to accompany their preaching, to make it be heard and considered; the preaching of the ministers at this day is so accompanied, and so will need no assistance of force from the magistrate. If the report of miracles done by one minister of the Gospel some time before, and in another place, were sufficient to make the preaching of ten or a thousand others be heard and considered; why is it not so now? For the credibility and attestation of the report is all that is of moment, when miracles done by others, in other place are the argument that prevails. But this, I fear, will not serve your turn in the business of penalties; and, whatever might satisfy you in the case of miracles, I doubt you would not think the salvation of souls sufficiently provided for, if the report of the force of penalties, used some time since on one side of the Tweed, were all that should assist the preachers of the true religion on the other, to make men hear and consider.

St. Paul, in his epistle to Titus, instructs him what he, and the presbyters he should ordain in the cities of Crete, were to do for the propagating of the Gospel, and bringing men heartily to embrace it. His directions are, that they should be "blameless, not rioters, not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine or filthy lucre, not strikers, not unruly; lovers of hospitality, and of good men; sober, just, holy, temperate; to be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and convince gainsayers; in all things to be a pattern of good works; in doctrine showing uncorruptedness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech that cannot be condemned, that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil to say of you. These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke, with all authority. Avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions. A man that is an heretic, after the first and second admonition, reject." To repay you the favour of your greek, it is παραιτοῦ; which, if I may take your liberty of receding from our translation, I would read "avoid."

The Cretans, by the account St. Paul gives of them,

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were a people that would require all the means that were needful to prevail with any strangers to the Gospel to hear and consider. But yet we find nothing directed for the support and propagation of the Gospel in this island, but preaching, exhortation, reproof, &c. with the example of a good life. In all this epistle, writ on purpose to instruct the preachers of the Gospel, in the means they were to use among the Cretans, for their conversion, not a word about miracles, their power or use: which one would think strange, if they were the means appointed, and necessary to make men hear and consider, and without which they would not do it. Preaching, admonition, exhortation, entreaties, instruction, by the common right of reason, were known, and natural to be used, to persuade men. There needed not much be said to convince men of it. But, if miracles were a necessary means, it was a means wholly new, unexpected, and out of the power of other teachers. And therefore one would think, if they were appointed for the ends you propose, one should hear something of that appointment: since that they were to be used, or how, and when, was farther from common apprehension, and seems to need some particular direction.

If you say the same Spirit that gave them the power of miracles, would also give them the knowledge both that they had it, and how to use it; I am far enough from limiting the operations of that infinitely wise Spirit, who will not fail to bring all the elect of God into the obedience of truth, by those means, and in that manner, he shall think necessary. But yet our Saviour, when he sent abroad his disciples, with the power of miracles, not only put it in their commission, whereby they were informed that they had that extraordinary gift, but added instructions to them in the use of it: "Freely you have received, freely give;" a caution as necessary to the Cretan elders, in the use of miracles, if they had that power; there being nothing more liable to be turned to the advantage of filthy lucre.

I do not question but the Spirit of God might give the power, and stir up the mind of the first spreaders of the Gospel to do miracles on some extraordinary occa-

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sion. But if they were a necessary means to make men hear and consider what was preached to them, till force supplied their place, and so were ordinarily to accompany the preaching of the Gospel, unless it should be preached without the means appointed and necessary to make it prevail; I think in that case, we may expect it should expressly have made a part of the preacher's commission; it making a necessary part of the effectual execution of his function.

But the apostle, it seems, thought fit to lay the stress upon instructing others, and living well themselves; upon "being instant in season, and out of season;" and therefore directs all his advices for the ordering the Cretan church, and the propagating the Gospel there, to make them attend to those necessary things of life and doctrine, without so much as mentioning the appointment, need, or use of miracles.

I said, "But whatever neglect or aversion there is in some men, impartially and thoroughly to be instructed; there will, upon a due examination, I fear, be found no less a neglect and aversion in others, impartially and thoroughly to instruct them. It is not the talking even general truths in plain and clear language, much less a man's own fancies in scholastical or uncommon ways of speaking an hour or two, once a week, in public, that is enough to instruct even willing hearers in the way of salvation, and the grounds of their religion:" and that politic discourses and invectives from the pulpit, instead of friendly and Christian debates with people at their houses, were not the proper means to inform men in the foundations of religion; and that if there were not a neglect in this part, I thought there would be little need of any other means. To this you tell me, in the next paragraph, "you do not see how pertinent my discourse, about this matter, is to the present question." If the showing the neglects, observable in the use of what is agreed to be necessary means, will not be allowed by you to be pertinent, in a debate about necessary means; when possibly those very neglects may serve to make other means seem requisite, which really

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are not so; yet if you are not of those who will never think any such discourse pertinent, you will allow me to mind you of it again, as not impertinent in answer to your last letter, wherein you so often tell us of the sufficient provision made for instruction. For wherever the neglect be, it can scarce be said there is sufficient provision made for instruction in a Christian country, where great numbers of those, who are in the communion of the national church, are grossly ignorant of the grounds of the Christian religion. And I ask you, whether it be in respect of such conformists you say, as you do in the same paragraph, that "when the best provision is made that can be, for the instruction of the people, you fear a great part of them will still need some moderate penalties to bring them to hear and receive instruction?"

But what if all the means that can, be not used for their instruction? That there are neglects of this kind, you will, I suppose, take the word of a reverend prelate of our church, who thought he could not better show his good-will to the clergy, than by a seasonable discourse of the pastoral care, to cure that neglect for the future. There he tells you, p. 115, 118, that "ministers should watch over and feed their flock, and not enjoy their benefices as farms, &c. Which reproach, says he, whatever we may be, our church is free of; which he proves by the stipulation and covenant they make with Christ, that they will never cease their labour, care, and diligence, till they have done all that lieth in them, according to their bounden duty; towards all such as are or should be committed to their care, to bring them to a ripeness of age in Christ." And a page or two after, having repeated part of the promise by those who take orders, he adds, "In this is expressed the so much *neglected*, but so necessary duty, which incumbents owe their flock in a private way; visiting, instructing, and admonishing; which is one of the most useful and important parts of their duty, how generally soever it may be disused or forgotten." P. 187 he says, "every priest that minds his

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duty will find, that no part of it is so useful as catechistical discourses; by means whereof, his people will understand all his sermons the better, when they have once a clear notion of all those terms that must run through them; for those not being understood, renders them all unintelligible. Another part of the priest's duty," he tells you, p. 201, "is with relation to them that are without, who are of the side of the church of Rome, or among the dissenters. Other churches and bodies are noted for their zeal in making proselytes; for their restless endeavours, as well as their unlawful methods in it; they reckoning perhaps that all will be sanctified by the increasing their *party*, which is the true name of making converts, except they become at the same time good men as well as votaries to a side or cause. We are certainly very *remiss* in this of both hands. Little pains is taken to gain either upon papists or non-conformists: the *law has been so much trusted to*, that that method *only* was thought sure; it was much valued, and others at the same time was much *neglected*. And whereas, at first, *without force or violence*, in forty years' time popery, from being the prevailing religion, was reduced to a handful: we have now, in above twice that number of years, made very little progress," &c.

Perhaps here again you will tell me, you "do not see how this is pertinent to the present question;" which, that you may see, give me leave to put you in mind, that neither you, nor any body else, can pretend force necessary, till all the means of persuasion have been used, and nothing neglected that can be done by all the softer ways of application. And since it is your own doctrine, that force is not lawful, unless where it is necessary; the magistrate, upon your principles, can neither lawfully use force, nor the ministers of any national church plead for it any where, but where they themselves have first done their duties: a draught whereof, adapted to our present circumstances, we have in the newly published discourse of the pastoral care. And he that shall press the use of force as necessary, before he

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can answer it to himself and the world; that those who have taken on them the care of souls have performed their duties; were best consider, whether he does not draw up an accusation against the men of that holy order, or against the magistrate who suffers them to neglect any part of their duty. For whilst what that learned bishop, in the passages above-cited, and in other places, mentions, is neglected, it cannot be said, that no other means but force is left; those, which are on all hands acknowledged necessary and useful means, not having yet been made use of.

To vindicate your method from novelty, you tell me, it is as old as St. Austin. Whatever he says in the place you quote, it shows only his opinion, but not that it was ever used. Therefore, to show it not to be new in practice, you add, that you "think it has been made use of by all those magistrates, who having made all requisite provisions for the instructing their people in the truth, have likewise required them, under convenient penalties, to embrace it." Which is as much as to say, that those magistrates who used your method did use your method. And that certainly you may think safely, and without fear of being gainsaid.

But now I will tell you what I think, in my turn: and that is, if you could have found any magistrates who had made use of your method, as well as you think you have found a divine that approves of it; you would have named those magistrates as forwardly as you do St. Austin. If I think amiss, pray correct me yet, and name them.

That which makes me imagine you will hardly find any examples of it, is what I there said in these words: "All other law-makers have constantly taken this method; that where any thing was to be amended, the fault was first declared, and then penalties denounced against all those who, after a time set, should be found guilty of it. This the common sense of mankind, and the very reason of laws, (which are intended not for punishment, but correction) has made so plain, that the subtilest and most refined law-makers have not gone out of this course, nor have the most ignorant and bar-

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barous nations missed it. But you have outdone Solon and Lycurgus, Moses and our Saviour; and are resolved to be a law-maker of a way by yourself. It is an old and obsolete way, and will not serve your turn, to begin with warnings and threats of penalties, to be inflicted on those who do not reform, but continue to do that which you think they fail in. To allow of impunity to the innocent, or the opportunity of amendment to those who would avoid the penalties, are formalities not worth your notice. You are for a shorter and surer way. Take a whole tribe, and punish them at all adventures, whether guilty or no of the miscarriage which you would have amended; or without so much as telling them what it is you would have them do, but leaving them to find it out if they can. All these absurdities are contained in your way of proceeding, and are impossible to be avoided by any one, who will punish dissenters, and only dissenters, to make them consider and weigh the grounds of their religion, and impartially examine whether it be true or no; and upon what grounds they took it up; that so they may find and embrace the truth that must save them." These absurdities, I fear, must be removed, before any magistrates will find your method practicable.

I having said, "Your method is not altogether unlike the plea made use of to excuse the late barbarous usage of the protestants in France, from being a persecution for religion, viz. That it was not a punishment for religion, but for disobeying the king's laws, which required them to come to mass: so by your rule dissenters must be punished, not for the religion they have embraced, but the religion they have rejected." In answer to this, in the next paragraph, you take abundance of pains to prove, that the king of France's laws, that require going to mass, are *no laws*. You were best to say so on the other side of the water. It is sure the punishments were punishments, *and the* dragooning was dragooning. And if you think that plea excused them not, I am of your mind. But nevertheless am of opinion, as I was, that it will prove as

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good a plea as yours; which is what you argue against in your next paragraph, in the words following, wherein you examine the likeness of your new method to this plea. You tell me, "I say, by your rule, the dissenters (from the true religion, for you speak of no other) must be punished (or, if I please, subjected to moderate penalties, such as shall make them uneasy, but neither destroy nor undo them): for what?" Indeed I thought by your first book you meant not for their religion, but to make them consider; but here you ask me "where it is you say that dissenters from the true religion are not to be punished for their religion? So then, it seems in your opinion now, dissenters from the true religion are to be punished," or, as you are pleased to mollify the expression, for the thing is the same, "subjected to moderate penalties for their religion." I think I shall not need to prove, to any one but one of your nice style, that the execution of penal laws, let the penalties be great or small, are punishments.

If therefore the religion of dissenters from the true, be a fault to be punished by the magistrate; who is to judge who are guilty of that fault? Must it be the magistrate every where; or the magistrate in some countries, and not in others; or the magistrate nowhere? If the magistrate nowhere is to be judge who are dissenters from the true religion, he can nowhere punish them. If he be to be every where judge; then the king of France, or the great Turk, must punish those whom they judge dissenters from the true religion, as well as other potentates. If some magistrates have a right to judge, and others not; that yet, I fear, how absurd soever it be, should I grant it, will not do your business. For besides that they will hardly agree to make you their infallible umpire in the case, to determine who of them have, and who have not, this right to judge which is the true religion; or if they should, and you should declare the king of England had that right, viz. whilst he complied to support the orthodoxy, ecclesiastical polity, and those ceremonies which you approve of; but that the king of France, and the great Turk, had it

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not, and so could have no right to use force on those they judged dissenters from the true religion; you ought to bethink yourself what you will reply to one that should use your own words: "If such a degree of outward force, as has been mentioned, be really of great and even necessary use, for the advancing of the true religion and salvation of souls; then it must be acknowledged, that in France and Turkey, &c. there is a right somewhere to use it, for the advancing those ends; unless we will say (what without impiety cannot be said), that the wise and benign Disposer and Governor of all things has not in France and Turkey furnished mankind with competent means for the promoting his own honour, and the good of souls."

You go on, and tell us they are to be punished, *not* for following the light of their own reason, nor for obeying the dictates of their own consciences, "*but* rather for the contrary. For the light of their own reason and the dictates of their own conscience (*if* their reason and their consciences were not perverted and abused) would undoubtedly lead them *to the* same thing, to which the method you speak of is designed to bring them;" *i. e.* to the same thing to which your reason and your conscience leads you. For if you were to argue with a papist, or a presbyterian, in the case, what privilege have you to tell him, that his reason and conscience is perverted, more than he has to tell you that yours is so? Unless it be this insupportable presumption, that your reason and conscience ought to be the measure of all reason and conscience in all others; which how you can claim, without pretending to infallibility, is not easy to discern.

The diversion you give yourself about the likeness and unlikeness of two pleas, I shall not trouble *myself* with; since, when your fit of mirth was over, you were forced to confess, That "as I have made your *plea for* you, you think there is no considerable difference, as to the fairness of them; excepting what arises *from* the different degrees of punishment, in the French discipline and your method. But if the French plea be not true; and that which I make to be yours be

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not yours;"—I must beg your pardon, sir; I did not think it was your opinion, nor do I yet remember that you any where said in your Argument, &c. that men were to be punished for their religion; but that it was purely to make men "examine the religion they had embraced, and the religion that they had rejected." And if that were of moment, I should think myself sufficiently justified for this my mistake, by what you say in your Argument, &c. from p. 6 to 12. But since you explain yourself otherwise here, I am not unwilling to take your hypothesis, as you from time to time shall please to reform it. You answer then, that "to make them examine is indeed the next end for which they are to be punished." But what is that to my question? Which, if it be pertinent, demands for what fault, not for what end, they are to be punished: as appears even by my next words. "So that they are punished, not for having offended against a law, *i. e.* not for any fault; for there is no law in England that requires them to examine." This, I must confess, was to show, that here, as in France, whatever was pretended, yet the true reason why people were punished was their religion. And it was for this agreement, that in both places religion was meant, though something else was talked of, that I said your plea was like that made use of in France. But I see I might have spared my pains to prove that you punish dissenters for their religion, since you here own it.

You tell me, in the same place, I was impertinent in my question; which was this, "For what then are they to be punished?" that I demanded for what end, and not for what fault, they are to be punished. In good earnest, sir, I was not so subtile as to distinguish them. I always thought that the end of all laws was to amend those faults which were forbidden; and that when any one was punished, the fault for which he was punished was the transgression of the law, in that particular which was by the law commanded or forbidden; and the end of the punishment was the amendment of that fault for the future. For example; if the law commanded to hear, not hearing was the fault punished;

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and the end of that punishment was to make the offenders hear. If the law commanded to examine, the fault punished, when that law was put in execution, was not examining; and the end of the punishment, to make the offenders examine. If the law commanded conformity, the fault was non-conformity; and the end of it to make men conform.

This was my apprehension concerning laws, and ends of punishments. And I must own myself still so dull as not to distinguish otherwise between "the fault for which men are to be punished, and the end for which they are to be punished;" but only as the one is past, the other future. The transgression, or fault, is an omission or action that a man is already guilty of; the end of the punishment, that it be not again repeated. So that if a man be punished for the religion he professes, I can see no other end for which he is punished, but to make him quit that religion. No other immediate end I mean; for other remote ends, to which this is subordinate, it may have. So that if not examining the religion which men have embraced, and the religion they have rejected, be not the fault for which men are punished; I would be glad you would show me how it can be the next end, as you say it is, of their being punished. And that you may not think my dulness gives you a labour without ground, I will tell you the reason why I cannot find any other next end of punishment, but the amendment of the fault forbidden; and that is, because that seems to me to be the end, the next end, of any action; which, when obtained, the action is to cease, and not cease till it be attained. And thus, I think, it is in punishments ordained by the law. When the fault forbidden is amended, the punishment is to cease, and not till then. This is the only way I have to know the end or final cause for which any action is done. If you have any other, you will do me a kindness to instruct me. This it is which makes me conclude (and I think with me all those who have not had the leisure and happiness to attain the utmost refining of the schools), that if their religion be the fault for which dissenters are punished, examining is not the end

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for which they are punished, but the change of their religion: though examining may, perhaps, in some men, precede their change, and help to it. But that is not necessary. A man may change his religion without it: and when he has changed, let the motive be what it will, the end the law aims at is obtained, and the punishment ceases. So, on the other side, if not hearing, not examining, be the fault for which men are punished; conformity is not the next end for which they are punished, though it may perhaps, in some, be a consequence of it; but hearing and examining must be understood to be the ends for which they are punished. If they are not the ends, why does the punishment cease when those ends are attained? And thus you have my thoughts concerning this matter, which perhaps will not be very pertinent, as mine have not the good luck always to be to you, to a man of nicer distinctions.

But let us consider your hypothesis as it now stands, and see what advantage you have got to your cause by this new explication. "Dissenters from the true religion are to be punished, say you, for their religion." Why? because it is a fault. Against whom? Against God. Thence it follows indeed, that God, if he pleases, may punish it. But how will you prove that God has given the magistrates of the earth a power to punish all faults against himself? Covetousness, or not loving our neighbour as ourselves, are faults or sins against God. Ought the magistrate to punish these? But I shall not need to trouble you much with that question. This matter, I think, will be decided between us without going so far.

If the magistrate may punish any one for not being of the true religion, must the magistrate judge what is that true religion, or no? If he must not, what must guide him in the punishing of some, and not of others? For so it is in all places where there is a national religion established by penal laws. If the magistrate be commissioned by the same law of nature (for that is all the commission you pretend to) to judge what is the true religion, by which he is authorized to punish those who

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dissent from it; must not all magistrates judge, and accordingly punish those who dissent from that, which they judge the true religion, *i. e.* in effect, those who dissent from theirs? And if all magistrates have a power to punish those who are not of their religion; I ask you, whether it be of more use or disadvantage to the promoting true religion, and salvation of souls? And when you have resolved that question, you will then be able to tell me, whether the usefulness of it, which must be determined by the greater good or harm it is like to do, is such as to justify your doctrine about it, or the magistrate's use of it.

Besides, your making the dissenting from the true religion a fault to be punished by the magistrate, puts an end to your pretence to moderate punishments; which, in this place, you make use of to distinguish yours from the French method; saying, that "your method punishes men with punishments which do not deserve to be called so, when compared with those of the French discipline." But if the dissenting from the true religion be a fault that the magistrate is to punish, and a fault of that consequence, that it draws with it the loss of a man's soul; I do not see how other magistrates, whose duty it is to punish faults under their cognizance, and by punishing to amend them, can be more remiss than the king of France has been, and forbear declaring that they will have all their people saved, and endeavour by such ways as he has done to effect it: especially since you tell us, that "God now leaves religion to the care of men, under his ordinary providence, to try whether they will do their duties in their several capacities or not, leaving them answerable for all that may follow from their neglect." In the correcting of faults, "malo nodo malus cuneus," is not only what is justifiable, but what is requisite. But of this more fully in another place.

In the next place, I do not see how, by your method, as you explain it here, the magistrate can punish any one for not being of the true religion, though we should grant him to have a power to do it; whilst you tell us, that "your method punishes men for rejecting the true religion, proposed to them with sufficient evidence;

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which certainly is a fault." By this part of your scheme it is plain, that you allow the magistrate to punish none but those to whom the true religion is proposed with sufficient evidence; and sufficient evidence, you tell us, "is such as will certainly win assent wherever it is duly considered." Now by this rule there will be very few that the magistrate will have a right to punish; since he cannot know whether those who dissent do it for want of due consideration in them, or want of sufficient evidence in what is proposed; unless you mean by due consideration, such consideration that always does bring men actually to assent; which is in effect to say nothing at all. For then your rule amounts to thus much, "that sufficient evidence is such as will certainly win assent wherever it is considered duly," *i. e.* so as to win assent. This being like some of those other rules we have met with, and ending in a circle; which after you have traced, you at last find yourself just where you were at setting out; I leave it to you to own as you think fit: and tell you, if by duly considering, you mean considering to his utmost; that then, that which is proposed to one with sufficient evidence to win assent, may not be so to another.

There are propositions extant in geometry, with their demonstrations annexed; and that with such sufficient evidence to some men of deep thought and penetration, as to make them see the demonstration, and give assent to the truth: whilst there are many others, and those no novices in mathematics, who, with all the consideration and attention they can use, are never able to attain unto it. It is so in other parts of truth. That which hath evidence enough to make one man certain, has not enough to make another so much as guess it to be true; though he has spared no endeavour or application in examining it. And therefore, if the magistrate be to punish none but those who reject the true religion, when it has been offered with sufficient evidence; I imagine he will not have many to punish, if he will, as he ought, distinguish between the innocent and the guilty.

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Upon your forwardness to encourage the magistrate's use of force in matters of religion, by its usefulness, even so far as to pretend advantages from what yourself acknowledge the misapplication of it, I say that "So instead of disheartening from, you give encouragement to the mischief; which upon your principle, joined to the natural thirst in man after arbitrary power, may be carried to all manner of exorbitancy, with some pretence of right." To which your reply is, That you "speak nowhere but of the use and necessity of force." What think you in the place mentioned, of the gain that you tell the sufferers they shall make by the magistrate's punishing them to bring them to a wrong religion? You do not, as I remember, there say, that force is necessary in that case; though they gaining, as you say, by it this advantage, "that they know better than they did before where the truth does lie," you cannot but allow, that such a misapplication of force "may do some service, indirectly and at a distance, towards the salvation of souls."

But that you may not think, whilst I had under consideration the dangerous encouragement you gave to men in power to be very busy with their force in matters of religion, by all the sorts of usefulness you could imagine of it, however applied, right or wrong, that I declined mentioning the necessity you pretend of force, because it would not as well serve to the purpose for which I mention its usefulness; I shall here take it so, that the reader may see what reason you had to complain of my not doing it before.

Thus then stands your system: "The procuring and advancing any way of the spiritual and eternal interests of men is one of the ends of civil society." And force is put into the magistrate's hands, as necessary for the attaining those ends, where no other means are left, "Who then upon your grounds may quickly find reason, where it suits his inclination, or serves his turn, to punish men directly to bring them to his religion." For if he may use force, because it is necessary, as being the only means left to make men consider those reasons.

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and arguments, which otherwise they would not consider; why may he not by the same rule use force, as the only means left to procure men degrees of glory, which otherwise they would not attain, and so to advance their eternal interests? For St. Paul assures us, that "the afflictions of this life work for us a far more exceeding weight of glory." So that whether the magistrate may not, when it may serve his turn, argue thus from your principles, judge you: dissenters from my religion must be punished, if in the wrong, to bring them into the right way; if in the right, to make them by their sufferings gainers of a far more exceeding weight of glory.

But you say, "unless it be as necessary for men to attain any greater degree of glory, as it is to attain glory, it will not follow, that if the magistrate may use force, because it may be indirectly, &c. useful towards the procuring any degree of glory, he may by the same rule use it where it may be in that manner useful towards the procuring a greater degree of glory. But that there is the same necessity of men's attaining a greater degree of glory, as there is of their attaining glory, no man will affirm. For without attaining glory, they cannot escape the damnation of hell; which yet they may escape, without any greater degree of glory." One of the ends of a commonwealth is, say you, the advancing men's eternal interests. The procuring greater degrees of glory, is the advancing a man's eternal interest. The use of force to make men suffer for the truth, what otherwise they would not suffer, is as necessary for the attaining a higher degree of glory, as using force to make men consider, what otherwise they would not consider, is necessary for the attaining any degree of glory. But you will say, "Attaining glory is absolutely necessary, but the attaining any greater degree of glory, however desirable, is not so necessary. Now if there be not the same necessity of the one of these, as there is of the other; there can be no pretence to say, that whatever is lawful in respect of one of them, is likewise so in respect of the other." But there will always be a just pre-

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tence to say, if advancing the eternal interests of men be one of the ends of a commonwealth, and that the force in the magistrate's hands be necessary to the attaining that end; that then the magistrate is obliged to use it, whether you will think that end absolutely necessary, or as necessary as another, or no. I shall not here trouble you again with your mistake about what is absolutely necessary; having taken notice of it in another place. Only I shall desire you to show me, that the attaining of glory is absolutely necessary, when next time you have occasion to affirm it. Attaining of glory is necessary in order to happiness; and attaining a greater degree of glory is necessary in order to greater happiness: but neither of them is absolutely necessary, but in order to their respective ends.

And now, though as you say, "you do not think yourself bound to take notice of all that may be done with some pretence of right:" yet, I suppose, upon cooler thoughts, when you have considered of what dangerous consequence an argument, managed as yours is, may be to the true religion, and the sincere professors of it; and what occasion or encouragement it may give to men in power, warmed with zeal, and excited by the proper ministers of their own religion, to make a wrong and exorbitant use of force in matters of religion; you will another time think yourself bound not to let it go abroad again without some caution to the magistrate in the use of it; without one word of advice at least, that since it is given him, as you say, only for promoting the true religion, he should take care, and examine impartially whether what he employs it for be the one only true religion: it being your opinion, whenever he makes use of force in matters of religion, for the promoting any thing but that, he goes beyond his commission, injures his subjects, and endangers his own soul.

By this time, sir, I suppose you see upon what grounds I think you have not cleared those difficulties which were charged by me on your method: and my reader will see what reason there was for those imputations, which, with so loud an outcry, you laid upon me of unfair dealing; since there is not one of them which

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cannot be made good to be contained either in your book or in your hypothesis; and so clearly, that I could not imagine that a man who had so far considered government, as to engage in print, in such a controversy as this, could miss seeing it as soon as mentioned to him. One of them which very much offends you, and makes you so often tell me what I say is impertinent, and nothing to the purpose, and sometimes to use warmer expressions, is, that I argue against a power in the magistrate to bring men to his own religion: for I could not imagine that, to a man of any thought, it could need proving, that if there were a commission given to all magistrates by the law of nature, which obliged them to use force to bring men to the true religion; it was not possible for them to put this commission in execution, without being judges what was the true religion; and then there needed no great quickness to perceive, that every magistrate, when your commission came to be put in execution, would, one as well as another, find himself obliged to use force to bring men to that which he believed to be the true religion. But since this was so hard for you to see, I now have been at the pains to prove it, and thereby to clear all those imputations. I shall not instance in any other: they are all of a like kind. Only where you complain I have not cited your words fairly, if you can show that I have done it any where in this or the second letter, to the advantage of my cause; or to avoid any argument in them, not answered; if you please to show it me, I shall either let you see your mistake, or acknowledge mine.

And now, whether you shall think what I have said worth that consideration you promise, or take it all for cavils and impertinencies, to me is very indifferent. Enjoy, as you please, that short and easy way of answering. But if the party you write for be, as you say, God, and the souls of men; it will require you seriously to weigh your scheme, examine and put together the parts of it; observe the tendency and consequences; and, in a word, consider things, and not words. For the party of God and souls needs not any help from obscurity or

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uncertainty of general and equivocal terms, but may be spoke out clearly and distinctly; needs no retreat in the round of equivalent, or the uncertainty of misapplied expressions, that may serve to amuse and deceive the unwary, but instruct nobody; and, lastly, needs no leave nor allowance from men of art, to direct both subjects and magistrates to the examination of the Scriptures, wherein God has revealed to the world the ways and means of salvation. In doing of this, in a treatise where you profess "the subject of your inquiry is only what method is to be used to bring men to the true religion," the party you profess to write for would have justified you against the rules of any lawful art; and no Christian man, of what art soever, would have denied you that liberty; and if I mistake not, the party, you say you write for, demands it of you.

If you find, upon a review of the whole, that you have managed your cause for God and the souls of men with that sincerity and clearness that satisfies your own reason, and you think may satisfy that of other men; I shall congratulate to you so happy a constitution. But if all your magnified and necessary means of force, in the way you contend for, reaches no farther than to bring men to a bare outward conformity to the church of England; wherein you can sedately affirm, that it is presumable that all that are of it are so upon reason and conviction; I suppose there needs no more to be said to convince the world what party you write for.

The party you write for is God, you say. But if all you have said aims or amounts to nothing more than that the church of England, as now established by law, in its doctrines, ceremonies, and discipline, should be supported by the power of the magistrate, and men by force be driven into it; I fear the world will think you have very narrow thoughts of God, or that that is not the party you write for. It is true, you all along speak of bringing men to the true religion. But to evidence to you, that by the one only true religion you mean only that of the church of England, I tell you, that, upon your principles, you cannot name any other church now in the world, (and I again demand of you to do

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it) for the promoting whereof, or punishing dissenters from it, the magistrate has the same right to use force as you pretend he has here in England. Till you therefore name some such other true church and true religion, besides that of England, your saying, that God is the party you write for, will rather show that you make bold with his name, than that you do not write for another party.

You say too, you write not for any party, but the souls of men. You write indeed, and contend earnestly, that men should be brought into an outward conformity to the church of England: but that they embrace that profession upon reason and conviction, you are content to have it presumable, without any farther inquiry or examination. And those who are once in the outward communion of the national church, however ignorant or irreligious they are, you leave there unassisted by your only competent means, force; without which, you tell us, the true religion, by its own light and strength, is not able to prevail against men's lusts, and the corruption of nature, so as to be considered as it ought, and heartily embraced. And this dropped not from your pen by chance; but you professedly make excuses for those of the national religion who are ignorant of the grounds of it, and give us reasons why force cannot be used to those who outwardly conform, to make them consider so as sincerely to embrace, believe, and obey the truth that must save them. But the reverend author of the Pastoral Care tells you, p. 201, "*party* is the true name of making converts, except they become at the same time good men."

If the use of force be necessary for the salvation of souls, and men's souls be the party you write for; you will be suspected to have betrayed your party, if your method and necessary means of salvation reach no farther than to bring men to outward conformity, though to the true church; and after that abandons them to their lusts and depraved natures, destitute of the help of force—your necessary and competent means of salvation.

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This way of managing the matter, whatever you intend, seems rather, in the fitness of it, to be for another party. But since you assure us, you write for nothing but God and men's souls, it can only be said you had a good intention, but ill luck; since your scheme, put into the language of the country, will fit any national church and clergy in the world, that can but suppose itself the true; and that I presume none of them will fail to do.

You were more than ordinary reserved and gracious, when you tell me, That "what party I write for, you will not undertake to say." But having told me, that my letter tends to the promoting of scepticism in religion; you thought, it is like, that was sufficient to show the party I write for; and so you might safely end your letter with words that looked like civil. But that you may another time be a little better informed what party I write for, I will tell you. They are those who in every nation fear God, work righteousness, and are accepted with him; and not those who in every nation are zealous for human constitutions; cry up nothing so much as outward conformity to the national religion; and are accepted by those who are the promoters of it. Those that I write for are those, who, according to the light of their own consciences, are every where in earnest in matters of their own salvation, without any desire to impose on others; a party so seldom favoured by any of the powers or sects of the world; a party that has so few preferments to bestow; so few benefices to reward the endeavours of any one who appears for it; that I conclude I shall easily be believed when I say, that neither hopes of preferment, nor a design to recommend myself to those I live amongst, has biassed my understanding, or misled me in my undertaking. So much truth as serves the turn of any particular church, and can be accommodated to the narrow interest of some human constitution, is indeed often received with applause, and the publisher finds his account in it. But I think I may say, truth, in its full latitude of those generous principles of the Gospel, which so much recommend

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and inculcate universal charity, and a freedom from the inventions and impositions of men in the things of God; has so seldom had a fair and favourable hearing any where, that he must be very ignorant of the history and nature of man, however dignified and distinguished, who proposes to himself any secular advantage by writing for her at that rate.

As to your request in the close of your letter, I hope this will satisfy you, that you might have spared it; and you, with the rest of the world, will see that all I writ in my former was so true, that you need not have given me any caution for the future. As to the pertinence of what I say, I doubt whether I shall please you; because I find by your last letter, that what is brought by me to show the weakness, absurdities, or insignificancy of what you write, you are very apt to call impertinent, and nothing to the purpose. You must pardon me therefore, if I have endeavoured more to please other readers than you in that point. I hope they will find, in what I have said, not much beside the matter. But to a man who, supposing himself in the right, builds all upon that supposition, and takes it for an injury to have that privilege denied him; to a man who would sovereignly decide for all the world what is the true religion, and thereby empower what magistrates he thinks fit, and what not, to use force; to such a man, not to seem impertinent, would be really to be so. This makes me pleased with your reply to so many passages of my letter, that they were nothing to the purpose: and it is in your choice whether in your opinion any thing in this shall be so.

But since this depends upon your keeping steadily to clear and settled notions of things, separate from words and expressions used in a doubtful and undetermined signification, wherewith men of art often amuse themselves and others,—I shall not be so unreasonable as to expect, whatever you promise, that you should lay by your learning to embrace truth, and own what will not perhaps suit very well with your circumstances and interest.

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I see my design not to omit any thing that you might think looks like an argument in yours, has made mine grow beyond the size of a letter. But an answer to any one being very little different from a letter, I shall let it go under that title. I have in it also endeavoured to bring the scattered parts of your scheme into some method, under distinct heads; to give a fuller and more distinct view of them; wherein, if any of the arguments, which give support to your hypothesis, have escaped me unawares, be pleased to show them me, and I shall either acknowledge their force, or endeavour to show their weakness.

I am, Sir,

Your most humble servant,

PHILANTHROPOS.

June 20, 1692.

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A

FOURTH LETTER

FOR

TOLERATION.

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A

FOURTH LETTER

FOR

TOLERATION*.

SIR,

A FRESH revival of the controversy formerly between you and me is what I suppose nobody did expect from you after twelve years' silence. But reputation, a sufficient cause for a new war, as you give the world to understand, hath put a resolution into your heart, and arms into your hands, to make an example of me, to the shame and confusion of all those who could be so injurious to you, as to think you could quit the opinion you had appeared for in print, and agree with me in the matter of Toleration. It is visible how tender even men of the most settled calmness are in point of reputation, and it is allowed the most excusable part of human frailty; and therefore nobody can wonder to see a

* In answer to A Second Letter to the Author of the Three Letters for Toleration. From the Author of the Argument of the Letter concerning Toleration briefly considered and answered; and of the Defence of it. With a Postscript, taking some Notice of Two Passages in The Rights of the Protestant Dissenters.

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report thought injurious laboured against with might and main, and the assistance and cause of religion itself taken in and made use of to put a stop to it. But yet for all this there are sober men who are of opinion, that it better becomes a Christian temper, that disputes, especially of religion, should be waged purely for the sake of truth, and not for our own: self should have nothing to do in them. But since as we see it will crowd itself in, and be often the principal agent, your ingenuity in owning what has brought you upon the stage again, and set you on work, after the ease and quiet you resolutely maintained yourself in so many years, ought to be commended, in giving us a view of the discreet choice you have made of a method *suited* to your purpose, which you publish to the world in these words, p. 2: "Being desirous to put a stop *to* a report so injurious, as well as groundless, as I look upon this to be, I think it will be no improper way of doing it, if I thus signify to you and the reader, that I find nothing more convincing in this your long letter than I did in your two former; giving withal a brief *specimen* of the answerableness of it: which I choose to do upon a few pages at the beginning, where you have placed your greatest strength, or at least so much of it as you think sufficient to put an end to this controversy."

Here we have your declaration of war, of the grounds that moved you to it, and of your compendious way to assured victory; which I must own is very new *and* very remarkable. You choose a few pages out of the beginning of my Third Letter; in these, you say, "*I* have placed my greatest strength." So that, what I have there said being baffled, it gives you a just triumph over my whole long Letter; and all the rest of it being but pitiful, weak, impertinent stuff, is by the overthrow of this forlorn hope fully confuted.

This is called answering by *specimen*. A new way, which the world owes to your invention; an evidence that whilst you said nothing you did not spare thinking. And indeed it was a noble thought, a stratagem which

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I believe scarce any other but yourself would have found out in a meditation of twice twelve years, how to answer arguments without saying a word to them, or so much as reciting them; and, by examining six or seven pages in the beginning of a book, reduce to nothing above three hundred pages of it that follow. This is indeed a decisive stroke that lays all flat before you. Who can stand against such a conqueror, who, by barely attacking of one, kills a hundred? This would certainly be an admirable way, did it not degrade the conqueror, whose business is to do; and turn him into a mere talking gazetteer, whose boasts are of no consequence. For after slaughter of foes, and routing of armies by such a dead-doing hand, nobody thinks it strange to find them all alive again safe and sound upon their feet, and in a posture of defending themselves. The event, in all sorts of controversies, hath often better instructed those who have, without bringing it to trial, presumed on the weakness of their adversaries. However this which you have set up, of confuting without arguing, cannot be denied to be a ready way, and well thought on to set you up high, and your reputation secure in the thoughts of your believing readers, if that be, as it seems it is, your business; but, as I take it, tends not at all to the informing their understandings, and making them see the truth and grounds it stands on. That, perhaps, is too much for the profane vulgar to know; it is enough for them that you know it for them, and have assured them that you can, when you please to condescend so far, confound all that any one offers against your opinion. An implicit faith of your being in the right, and ascribing victory to you, even in points whereof you have said nothing, is that which some sort of men think most useful; and so their followers have but tongues for their champion to give him the praise and authority he aims at, it is no matter whether they have any eyes for themselves to see on which side the truth lies. Thus, methinks, you and I both find our account in this controversy under your management; you in setting your reputation safe from the blemish it would have been to it that you were brought

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over to my opinion; and I in seeing (if you will forgive me so presumptuous a word) that you have left my cause safe in all those parts you have said nothing to, and not very much damaged in that part you have attacked, as I hope to show the indifferent reader. You enter upon your specimen, p. 2, by minding me that I tell you, "That I doubt not but to let you see, that if you will be true to your own principles, and stand to what you have said, you must carry some degrees of force to all those degrees which in words you declare against, even to the discipline of fire and faggot." And you say, "if I make my word good, you assure me you will carry a faggot yourself to the burning what you have written for so unmerciful and outrageous a discipline: but till I have done that, you suppose the discipline you have endeavoured to defend may remain safe and unhurt, as it is, in its own nature, harmless and salutary to the world."

To promise fairly is then the part of an honest man, when the time of performance is not yet come. But it falls out unluckily here, for you who have undertaken, by answering some parts of my Second Letter, to show the answerableness of the whole, that instead of answering, you promise to retract, "if I make good my word, in proving upon your own principles you must carry your some degrees of force to fire and faggot."

Sir, my endeavours to make my word good have lain before you a pretty competent time: the world is witness of it, and will, as I imagine, think it time for you, since you yourself have brought this question upon the stage, either to acknowledge that I have made my word good, or, by invalidating my arguments, show that I have not. He that after a debt of so many years only promises what brave things he will do hereafter, is hardly thought upon the Exchange to do what he ought. The account in his hand requires to be made up and balanced; and that will show, not what he is to promise, but, if he be a fair man, what he is to perform. If the schools make longer allowances of time, and admit evasions for satisfaction, it is fit you use your privilege, and take more time to consider; only I crave

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leave in the mean while to refer my reader to what I have said on this argument, Chap. iv. of my Third Letter, that he may have a view of your way of answering by specimen, and judge whether all that I have there urged be answered by what you say here, or what you promise here be ever like to be performed.

The next sample you give to show the answerableness of my Letter, is not much more lucky than the former; it may be seen, pp. 3 and 4, where you say, that I tell you, p. 119, "That you have altered the question;" for it seems, p. 26, you tell me the question between us is, "Whether the magistrate has a right to use force to bring men to the true religion? Whereas, p. 76, you yourself, I say, own the question to be, whether the magistrate has a right to use force in matters of religion?" "Which affirmation of mine, you must take leave to tell me, is a mere fiction; for neither p. 76, nor any where else, do you own the question to be what I say you do."

"And as to using force in matters of religion (which you say are my words, not yours), if I mean by it the using force to bring men to any other religion besides the true, you are so far from owning the question to be, whether the magistrate has a right to use force for such a purpose, that you have always thought it out of question, that no man in the world, magistrate or other, can have any right to use either force, or any other means that I can name, to bring men to any false religion, how much soever he may persuade himself that it is true."

"It is not, therefore, from any alteration, but from the true state of the question, that you take occasion, as I complain without cause, to lay a load on me, for charging you with the absurdities of a power in the magistrates to punish men, to bring them to their religion." "But it seems, having little to say against what you do assert, you say, I find it necessary myself to alter the question, and to make the world believe that you assert what you do not; that I may have something before me which I can confute."

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In this paragraph you positively deny that it is any where owned by you as the question between us, "Whether the magistrate has a right of using force in matters of religion?" Indeed, these words are not as they are cited in p. 76 of your former Letter; but he that will turn over the leaf may, in p. 78, read these words of yours, viz. that "You refer it to me, whether I, in saying nobody has a right, or you, in saying the magistrate has a right to use force in matters of religion, have most reason:" though you positively tell me, "that neither p. 76, nor any where else, do you own the question to be what I say you do." And now let the reader judge between us. I should not perhaps have so much as taken notice of this, but that you, who are so sparing of your answer, that you think a brief specimen upon some few pages of the beginning of my Letter sufficient to confute all I have said in it, do yet spend the better part of two pages on this; which, if I had been mistaken in, it had been of no great consequence; of which I see no other use you have but to cast on me some civil reflections of your fashion, and fix on me the imputation of fiction, mere fiction; a compliment which I shall not return you, though *you* say "*using force in matters of religion*" are my words, not yours. Whether they are your words or not, let p. 78 of your former Letter decide; where you own yourself to say, that "the magistrate has a right *to* use force in matters of religion." So that this, as I take it, is a specimen of your being very positive in a mistake, and about a plain matter of fact, about an action of your own; and so will scarce prove a specimen of the answerableness of all I say in my Letter, unless we must allow that truth and falsehood are equally answerable, when you declare against either of them.

The next part of your specimen we have, pp. 4, 5, where you tell me that I undertake to prove, that "if upon your grounds the magistrate be obliged to use force to bring men to the true religion, it will necessarily follow, that every magistrate, who believes his religion to be true, is obliged to use force to bring men to his."

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"Now because this undertaking is so necessary for me, and my whole cause seems to depend upon the success of it, you shall the more carefully consider how well I perform it: but before you do this it will be fit to let me know in what sense you grant my inference, and in what sense you deny it. Now that every magistrate, who upon just and sufficient grounds believes his religion to be true, is obliged to use some moderate penalties, (which is all the force you ever contended for) to bring men to his religion, you freely grant, because that must needs be the true religion; since no other can, upon such grounds, be believed to be true. But that any magistrate, who upon weak and deceitful grounds believes a false religion to be true (and he can never do it upon better grounds), is obliged to use the same, or any other means, to bring men to his religion; this you flatly deny, nor can it by any rules of reasoning be inferred from what you assert."

Here you tell me you grant my inference, in this sense, viz. "That every magistrate, who upon just and sufficient grounds believes his religion to be true, is bound to use force to bring men to it."

Here you grant that every magistrate, without knowing that his religion is true, is obliged, upon his believing it to be true, to use force to bring men to it; indeed you add, "who believes it to be true upon just and sufficient grounds." So you have got a distinction, and that always sets off a disputant, though many times it is of no use to his argument. For here let me ask you, who must be judge, whether the grounds upon which he believes his religion to be true be just and sufficient? Must the magistrate himself judge for himself, or must you judge for him? A third competitor in this judgment I know not where you will find for your turn. If every magistrate must judge for himself, whether the grounds upon which he believes his religion to be true are just and sufficient grounds, your limitation of the use of force to such only as believe upon just and sufficient grounds, bating that it is an ornament to your style and learning, might have been spared, since

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it leaves my inference untouched in the full latitude I have expressed it concerning every magistrate; there not being any one magistrate excluded thereby from an obligation to use force to bring men to his own religion, by this your distinction. For if every magistrate, who upon just and sufficient grounds believes his religion to be true, be obliged to use force to bring men to his religion, and every magistrate be himself judge, whether the grounds he believes upon be just and sufficient; it is visible every magistrate is obliged to use force to bring men to his religion; since any one, who believes any religion to be true, cannot but judge the grounds, upon which he believes it to be true, are just and sufficient; for if he judged otherwise, he could not then believe it to be true. If you say, you must judge for the magistrate, then what you grant is this, That every magistrate who, upon grounds that you judge to be just and sufficient, believes his religion to be true, is obliged to use force to bring men to his religion. If this be your meaning, as it seems not much remote from it, you will do well to speak it out, that the magistrates of the world may know who to have recourse to in the difficulty you put upon them, in declaring them under an obligation to use force to bring men to the true religion; which they can neither certainly know, nor must venture to use force to bring men to, upon their own persuasion of the truth of it; when they have nothing but one of these two, viz. knowledge, or belief that the religion they promote is true, to determine them. Necessity has at last (unless you would have the magistrate act in the dark, and use his force wholly at random) prevailed on you to grant, that the magistrate may use force to bring men to that religion which he believes to be true; but, say you, "his belief must be upon just and sufficient grounds." The same necessity remaining still, must prevail with you to go one step further, and tell me whether the magistrate himself must be judge, whether the grounds, upon which he believes his religion to be true, be just and sufficient; or whether you are to be judge for him. If you say the first, my inference stands good, and then this question, I

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think, is yielded, and at an end. If you say you are to be judge for the magistrates, I shall congratulate to the magistrates of the world the way you have found out for them to acquit themselves of their duty, if you will but please to publish it, that they may know where to find you; for in truth, sir, I prefer you, in this case, to the pope; though you know that old gentleman at Rome has long since laid claim to all decisions of this kind, and alleges infallibility for the support of his title; which indeed will scarce be able to stand at Rome, or any where else, without the help of infallibility. But of this perhaps more in the next paragraph.

You go on with your specimen in your next paragraph, p. 5, which I shall crave leave of my reader to set down at large, it being a most exact and studied piece of artificial fencing, wherein, under the cover of good words, and the appearance of nice thinking, nothing is said; and therefore may deserve to be kept, not as a specimen of your answering,—for, as we shall see, you answer nothing,—but as a specimen of your skill in seeming to say something where you have nothing to answer. You tell me that I say, p. 120, that " I suppose that you will grant me (what he must be a hard man indeed that will not grant) that any thing laid upon the magistrate as a duty, is some way or other practicable. Now the magistrate being obliged to use force in matters of religion, but yet so as to bring men only to the true religion; he will not be in any capacity to perform this part of his duty, unless the religion he is to promote be what he can certainly know, or else what it is sufficient for him to believe to be the true: either his knowledge, or his opinion, must point out that religion to him, which he is by force to promote. Where, if by knowing, or knowledge, I mean the effect of strict demonstration; and by believing, or opinion, any sort of assent or persuasion, how slightly soever grounded: then you must deny the sufficiency of my division; because there is a third sort or degree of persuasion, which, though not grounded upon strict demonstration, yet in firmness and stability does far exceed that which is built

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upon slight appearances of probability; being grounded upon such clear and solid proof as leaves no reasonable doubt in an attentive and unbiassed mind: so that it approaches very near to that which is produced by demonstration; and is therefore, as it respects religion, very frequently and familiarly called in Scripture not faith or belief only, but knowledge, and in divers places full assurance, as might easily be shown, if that were needful. Now this kind of persuasion, this knowledge, this full assurance, men may, and ought to have of the true religion: but they can never have it of a false one. And this it is that must point out that religion to the magistrate, which he is to promote by the method you contend for."

Here the first thing you do is to pretend an uncertainty of what I mean by "knowing or knowledge, and by believing or opinion." First, As to knowledge, I have said "certainly know." I have called it "vision; knowledge and certainty; knowledge properly so called." And for believing or opinion, I speak of believing with assurance; and say, that believing in the highest degree of assurance is not knowledge. That whatever is not capable of demonstration is not, unless it be self-evident, capable to produce knowledge, how well grounded and great soever the assurance of faith may be wherewith it is received. That I grant, that a strong assurance of any truth, settled upon prevalent and well-grounded arguments of probability, is often called knowledge in popular ways of talking; but being here to distinguish between knowledge and belief, to what degrees of confidence soever raised, their boundaries must be kept, and their names not confounded; with more to the same purpose, p. 120, 121; whereby it is so plain, that by knowledge I mean the effect of strict demonstration, and by believing or opinion, I mean any degree of persuasion even to the highest degree of assurance, that I challenge you yourself to set it down in plainer and more express terms. But nobody can blame you for not finding your adversary's meaning, let it be ever so plain, when you can find nothing to

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answer to it. The reason therefore which you allege for the denying the sufficiency of my division is no reason at all. Your pretended reason is, because there is "a third sort or degree of persuasion, which, though not grounded upon strict demonstration, yet in firmness and stability does far exceed that which is built upon slight appearances of probability," &c. Let it be so, that there is a degree of persuasion not grounded upon strict demonstration, far exceeding that which is built upon slight appearances of probability. But let me ask you what reason can this be to deny the sufficiency of my division, because there is, as you say, a third sort or degree of persuasion; when even that which you call this third sort or degree of persuasion is contained in my division? This is a specimen indeed, not of answering what I have said, but of not answering, and for such I leave it to the reader. "A degree of persuasion, though not grounded on strict demonstration, yet in firmness and stability far exceeding that which is built upon slight appearances of probability, you call here a third sort or degree of persuasion." Pray tell me which are the two other sorts; for knowledge upon strict demonstration is not belief or persuasion, but wholly above it. Besides, if the degrees of firmness in persuasion make different sorts of persuasion, there are not only three, but three hundred sorts of persuasion; and therefore the naming of your third sort was with little ground, and to no purpose or tendency to an answer; though the drawing in something like a distinction be always to the purpose of a man who hath nothing to answer, it giving occasion for the use of many good words, which, though nothing to the point, serve to cover the disputant's saying nothing, under the appearance of learning, to those who will not be at the pains to examine what he says.

You say, "every magistrate is by the law of nature under an obligation to use force to bring men to the true religion." To this I urge, that the magistrate hath nothing else to determine him in the use of force, for promotion of any religion one before another, but only his own belief or persuasion of the truth of it.

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Here you had nothing to do, but fairly to grant or deny; but instead thereof you first raise a groundless doubt, as I have shown, about my meaning, whereof there could be no doubt at all to any one who would but read what I had said; and thereupon having got a pretence for a distinction, you solemnly tell the world "there is a third sort of persuasion, which, though not grounded on strict demonstration, yet in firmness and stability does far exceed that which is built upon slight appearances of probability, leaving no doubt, approaching near to knowledge, being full assurance." Well, the magistrate hath a "persuasion of firmness and stability, has full assurance;" must he be determined by this his full assurance in the promoting of that religion by force, of whose truth he is in so high a degree of persuasion so fully assured? "No, say you, it must be grounded upon such clear and solid proof as leaves no reasonable doubt in an attentive and unbiassed mind." To which the magistrate is ready to reply, that he, upon his grounds, can see no reasonable doubt; and that his is an attentive and unbiassed mind; of all which he himself is to be judge, till you can produce your authority to judge for him; though, in the conclusion, you actually make yourself judge for him. "It is such a kind of persuasion, such a full assurance must point out to the magistrate that religion he is to promote by force, which can never be had but of the true religion;" which is in effect, as every one may see, the religion that you judge to be true, and not the religion the magistrate judges to be true. For pray tell me, must the magistrate's full assurance point out to him the religion which he is by force to promote; or must he by force promote a religion, of whose truth he hath no belief, no assurance at all? If you say the first of these, you grant that every magistrate must use force to promote his own religion; for that is the religion whereof he has so full assurance, that he ventures his eternal state upon it. Ay, say you, that is for want of attention; and because he is not unbiassed. It is like he will say the same of you, and then you are quits. And that he should by force promote that religion which

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he believes not to be true, is so absurd, that I think you can neither expect it, nor bring yourself to say it. Neither of these therefore being answers that you can make use of, that which lies at the bottom, though you give it but covertly, is this, "that the magistrate ought by force to promote the religion that you believe with full assurance to be true." This would do admirably well for your purpose, were not the magistrate entitled to ask, "who made you a judge for him in the case?" and ready to retort your own words upon you, that it is want of attention and unbiassedness in you, that puts your religion past doubt with you upon your proofs of it. Try when you please with a Bramin, a Mahometan, a papist, Lutheran, quaker, anabaptist, presbyterian, &c. you will find, if you argue with them as you do here with me, that the matter will rest here between you, and that you are no more a judge for any of them than they are for you. Men in all religions have equally strong persuasions, and every one must judge for himself; nor can any one judge for another, and you least of all for the magistrate; the ground you build upon, that "firmness and stability of persuasion in the highest degree of assurance leaves no doubt, can never be had of a false religion" being false; all your talk of full assurance pointing out to the magistrate the true religion that he is obliged by force to promote, amounts to no more but his own religion, and can point out no other to him.

However, in the next paragraph you go on with your specimen, and tell me, "Hence appears the impertinency of all I discourse, p. 143, 144, concerning the difference between faith and knowledge: where the thing I was concerned to make out, if I would speak to the purpose, was no other but this, that there are as clear and solid grounds for the belief of false religions as there are for the belief of the true: or, that men both as firmly and as rationally believe and embrace false religions as they can the true. This, you confess, is a point, which, you say, when I have well cleared and established it, will do my business, but nothing else will. And therefore my talk of faith and

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knowledge, however it may amuse such as are prone to admire all that I say; will never enable me, before better judges, from the duty of every magistrate to use moderate penalties for promoting the true religion, to infer the same obligation to lie upon every magistrate in respect of his religion, whatever it be."

Where the impertinency lies will be seen when it is remembered, that the question between us is not what religion has the most clear and solid grounds for the belief of it; much less whether "there are as clear and solid grounds for the belief of false religions as there are for the belief of the true," *i. e.* whether falsehood has as much truth in it as truth itself? a question which, I guess, no man, but one of your great pertinency, could ever have proposed: but the question here between you and me, is what must point out to the magistrate that religion which he is by force to promote, that so he may be able to perform the duty that you pretend is incumbent on him by the law of nature; and here I proved, that having no certain, demonstrative knowledge of the true religion, all that was left him to determine him in the application of force, (which you make the proper instrument of promoting the true religion) for the promoting the true religion, was only his persuasion, belief, or assurance of the true religion, which was always his own; and so in this state the religion, which by force the magistrates of the world must of necessity promote, must be either their own or none at all. Thus the argument standing between us, I am apt to think the world may be of opinion, that it had been pertinent to your cause to have answered my argument, if you had any thing to answer; which since you have not done, this specimen also of the facility, wherewith you can answer all I have said in the third Letter, may be joined to the former, and be a specimen of something else than what you intended it. For in truth, sir, the endeavouring to set up a new question, absurd in itself, and nothing at all to the purpose, without offering any thing to clear the difficulty you were pressed with, will to understanding readers appear pertinent in one

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who sets himself up for an arrant Drawcansir, and is giving specimens of himself, that nothing can stand in his way.

It is with the same pertinency, that to this proposition, "that there are as clear and solid grounds for the belief of a false religion as there are for the belief of the true," you join this following as an equivalent, "Or that men may both as firmly and as rationally believe and embrace false religions as they can the true;" and you would fain have it thought that your cause is gained, unless I will maintain these two absurd propositions, which my argument has nothing to do with.

And you seem to me to build upon these two false propositions.

I. That, in the want of knowledge and certainty of which is the true religion, nothing is fit to set the magistrate upon doing his duty in employing of force to make men consider and embrace the true religion, but the highest persuasion and full assurance of its truth. Whereas his own persuasion of the truth of his own religion, in what degree soever it be, so he believes it to be true, will, if he thinks it his duty by force to promote the true, be sufficient to set him on work. Nor can it be otherwise, since his own persuasion of his own religion, which he judges so well grounded as to venture his future state upon it, cannot but be sufficient to set him upon doing what he takes to be his duty in bringing others to the same religion.

II. Another false supposition you build upon is this, that the true religion is always embraced with the firmest assent. There is scarce any one so little acquainted with the world, that hath not met with instances of men most unmoveably confident, and fully assured in a religion which was not the true. Nor is there among the many absurd religions of the world, almost any one that does not find votaries to lay down their lives for it: and if that be not firm persuasion and full assurance that is stronger than the love of life, and has force enough to make a man throw himself into the arms of death, it is hard to know what is firm

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persuasion and full assurance. Jews and Mahometans have frequently given instances of this highest degree of persuasion. And the Bramins' religion in the East is entertained by its followers with no less assurance of its truth, since it is not unusual for some of them to throw themselves under the wheels of a mighty chariot, wherein they on solemn days draw the image of their God about in procession, there to be crushed to death, and sacrifice their lives in honour of the God they believe in. If it be objected, that those are examples of mean and common men; but the great men of the world, and the heads of societies, do not so easily give themselves up to a confirmed bigotry: I answer, The persuasion, they have of the truth of their own religion, is visibly strong enough to make them venture themselves, and use force to others upon the belief of it. Princes are made like other men; believe upon the like grounds that other men do; and act as warmly upon that belief, though the grounds of their persuasion be in themselves not very clear, or may appear to others to be not of the utmost solidity. Men act by the strength of their persuasion, though they do not always place their persuasion and assent on that side on which, in reality, the strength of truth lies. Reasons that are not thought of, nor heard of, nor rightly apprehended, nor duly weighed, make no impression on the mind: and truth, how richly soever stored with them, may not be assented to, but lie neglected. The only difference between princes and other men herein is this, that *princes are usually more positive in matters of religion, but less instructed.* The softness and pleasures of a court, to which they are usually abandoned when young, and affairs of state which wholly possess them when grown up, seldom allow any of them time to consider and examine that they may embrace the true religion. And here your scheme, upon your own supposition, has a fundamental error that overturns it. For you affirming that force, your way applied, is the necessary and competent means to bring men to the true religion; you leave magistrates destitute of these necessary and competent means of being brought to

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the true religion, though that be the readiest way, in your scheme the only way, to bring other men to it, and is contended for by you as the only method.

But further, you will perhaps be ready to reply, that you do not say barely, that men may not as firmly, but that they cannot as firmly and as rationally, believe and embrace false religions as they can the true. This, be it as true as it will, is of no manner of advantage to your cause. For here the question, necessary to be considered in your way of arguing, returns upon you, who must be judge whether the magistrate believes and embraces his religion rationally or no? If he himself be judge, then he does act rationally, and it must have the same operation on him as if it were the most rational in the world: if you must be judge for him, whether his belief be rational or no, why may not others judge for him as well as you? or at least he judge for you, as well as you for him; at least till you have produced your patent of infallibility and commission of superintendency over the belief of the magistrates of the earth, and shown the commission whereby you are appointed the director of the magistrates of the world in their belief, which is or is not the true religion? Do not think this said without cause; your whole discourse here has no other tendency, but the making yourself judge of what religion should be promoted by the magistrate's force; which, let me tell you by the way, every warm zealot in any religion has as much right to be as you. I beseech you tell me, are you not persuaded, nay, fully assured, that the church of England is in the right, and all that dissent from her are in the wrong? Why else would you have force used to make them consider and conform? If then the religion of the church of England be, as you are fully assured, the only true religion, and the magistrate must ground his persuasion of the truth of his religion on such clear and solid proofs as the true religion alone has, and no false one can have; and by that persuasion the magistrate must be directed in the use of force, (for all this in effect you say, in the sixth and beginning of the seventh page;) what is this but covertly to say, that it

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is the duty of all magistrates to use force to bring men to embrace the religion of the church of England? Which, since it plainly follows from your doctrine, and I think you cannot deny to be your opinion, and what in effect you contend for; you will do well to speak it out in plain words, and then there will need no more to be said in the question.

And now I desire it may be considered, what advantage this supposition of force, which is supposed put into the magistrate's hands by the law of nature to be used in religion, brings to the true religion, when it arms five hundred magistrates against the true religion, who must unavoidably in the state of things in the world act against it, for one that uses force for it. I say that this use of force in the magistrate's hand is barely supposed by you from the benefit it is like to produce; but it being demonstration, that the prejudice that will accrue to the true religion from such an use of force is five hundred times more than the advantage can be expected from it; the natural and unavoidable inference from your own ground of benefit is, that God never gave any such power to the magistrate; and there it will rest till you can by some better argument prove the magistrate to have such a power: to which give me leave to add one word more.

You say the magistrate is obliged by the law of nature to use force to promote the true religion: must he stand still and do nothing till he certainly know which is the true religion? If so, the commission is lost, and he can never do his duty; for to certain knowledge of the true religion he can in this world never arrive. May he then act upon "firm persuasions and full assurance, grounded upon such clear and solid proofs as the true religion alone has, and no false one can have?" And then indeed you have distinguished yourself into a safe retreat. For who can doubt but your third sort or degree of persuasion, if that be your meaning, will determine the magistrate to the true religion, when it is grounded on those which are the proofs only of the true religion; which if it be all that you intend by your full assurance, (which is the title you give to this

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your third sort or degree of persuasion) I must desire you to apply this in answer to my argument. I say, magistrates in general have nothing to determine them in their application of force but their own persuasion; and your answer is, the magistrates of the true religion have their own persuasion to determine them; but of all the other magistrates, which are above a hundred, I might say a thousand to one, you say nothing at all; and thus, by the help of a distinction, the question is resolved. I say the magistrates are not in a capacity to perform their duty, if they be obliged to use force to promote the true religion, since they have nothing to determine them but their own persuasion of the truth of any religion; which, in the variety of religions which the magistrates of the world have embraced, cannot direct them to the true. Yes, say you, their persuasion, who have embraced the true religion, will direct them to the true religion. Which amounts at last to no more but this, That the magistrate that is in the right, is in the right: a very true proposition without doubt; but whether it removes the difficulty I proposed, any better than begging the question, you were best consider. There are five hundred magistrates of false religions for one that is of the true; I speak much within compass: it is a duty incumbent on them all, say you, to use force to bring men to the true religion. My question is, how can this be compassed by men who are unavoidably determined by the persuasion of the truth of their own religion? It is answered, they who are of the true religion will perform their duty. A great advantage surely to true religion, and worth the contending for, that it should be the magistrate's duty to use force for promoting the true religion, when in the state of things that is at present in the world, and always hitherto has been, one magistrate in five hundred will use force to promote the true religion, and the other four hundred ninety-nine to promote false ones:

But perhaps you will tell me, That you do not allow that magistrates, who are of false religions, should be determined by their own persuasions, which are "built upon slight appearances of probability; but such as

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are grounded upon clear and solid proofs," which the true religion alone has. In answer to this, I ask, Who must be judge whether his persuasion be grounded on clear and solid proofs; the magistrate himself, or you for him? If the magistrate himself, then we are but where we were; and all that you say here, with the distinction that you have made about several sorts of persuasion, serves only to lead us about to the same place: for the magistrate, of what religion soever, must, notwithstanding all you have said, be determined by his own persuasion. If you say you must be judge of the clearness and solidity of the proofs upon which the magistrate grounds the belief of his own religion, it is time you should produce your patent, and show the commission whereby you act.

There are other qualifications you assign of the proof, on which you tell us "your third sort or degree of persuasion is grounded; and that is such as leaves no reasonable doubt in an attentive and unbiassed mind:" which unless you must be judge what is a reasonable doubt, and which is an attentive and unbiassed mind, will do you no manner of service. If the magistrate must be judge for himself in this case, you can have nothing to say to him; but if you must be judge, then any doubt about your religion will be unreasonable, and his not embracing and promoting your religion will be want of attention and an unbiassed mind. But let me tell you, give but the same liberty of judging for the magistrate of your religion to the men of another religion, which they have as much right to as you have to judge for the magistrate of any other religion in the points mentioned; all this will return upon you. Go into France, and try whether it be not so. So that your plea for the magistrate's using force for promoting the true religion, as you have stated it, gives as much power and authority to the king of France to use it against his dissenting subjects, as to any other prince in Christendom to use it against theirs, name which you please.

The fallacy in making it the magistrate's duty to promote by force the only true religion lies in this, that you allow yourself to suppose the magistrate, who is of

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your religion, to be well-grounded, attentive, and unbiassed, and fully and firmly assured that his religion is true; but that other magistrates of other religions different from yours are not so: which, what is it but to erect yourself into a state of infallibility above all other men of different persuasions from yours, which yet they have as good a title to as yourself?

Having thus advanced yourself into the chair, and given yourself the power of deciding for all men which is, and which is not the true religion; it is not to be wondered that you so roundly pronounce all my discourse, p. 143, 144, "concerning the difference between faith and knowledge, to be impertinency;" and so magisterially to tell me, "that the thing I was there concerned to make out, if I would speak to the purpose, was no other but this, that there are as clear and as solid grounds for the belief of false religions as there are for belief of the true: or, that men may both as firmly and as rationally believe and embrace false religions as they can the true."

The impertinency in these two or three pages I shall leave to shift for itself in the judgment of any indifferent reader; and will only, at present, examine what you tell "I was concerned to make out, if I would speak to the purpose."

My business there was to prove, That the magistrate being taught that it was his duty to use force to promote the true religion, it would thence unavoidably follow, that not having knowledge of the truth of any religion, but only belief that it was true, to determine him in his application of force; he would take himself in duty bound to promote his own religion by force; and thereupon force would inevitably be used to promote false religions, upon those very grounds upon which you pretend to make it serviceable only to the true; and this, I suppose, I have in those pages evidently proved, though you think not fit to give any other answer to what I there say, but that it is impertinent, and I should have proved something else; which you would have done well, by a plain and clear deduction, to have shown from my words.

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[*The two following leaves of the copy are either lost or mislaid.*]

After this new invention of yours, "of answering by specimen," so happily found out for the ease of yourself and other disputants of renown, that shall please to follow it; I cannot presume you should take notice of any thing I have to say: you have assumed the privilege, by showing your strength against one argument, to pronounce all the rest baffled; and therefore to what purpose is it to offer difficulties to you, who can blow them all off with a breath? But yet to apologize for myself to the world, for being of opinion that it is *not* always from want of consideration, attention, or being unbiassed, that men with firmness of persuasion embrace, and with full assurance adhere to, the wrong side in matters of religion; I shall take the liberty to offer the famous instance of the two Reynolds's, brothers, both men of learning and parts; whereof the one being of the church of England, and the other of the church of Rome, they both desiring each other's conversion to the religion which he himself was of, writ to one another about it, and that with such appearance of solid and clear grounds on both sides, that they were wrought upon by them: each changed his religion, and that with so firm a persuasion and full an assurance of the truth of that which he turned to, that no endeavours or arguments of either of them could ever after move the other, or bring him back from what he had persuaded him to. If now I should ask to which of these two full assurance pointed out the true religion; you no doubt, if you would answer at all, would say, To him that embraced the church of England, and a papist would say the other: but if an indifferent man were asked whether this full assurance was sufficient to point out the true religion to either of them, he must answer, No; for if it were, they must necessarily have been both of the same religion.

To sum up then what you answer to my saying, "It cannot be the magistrate's duty to use force to promote the true religion, because he is not in a capacity to perform that duty; for not having a certain knowledge,

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but only his own persuasion, to point out to him which is the true religion, if he be satisfied it is his duty to use force to promote the true religion, it will inevitably follow, that he must always use it to promote his own." To which you answer, That a persuasion of a low degree is not sufficient to point out that religion to the magistrate which he is to promote by force; but that a "firmness and stability of persuasion, a full assurance, is that which is to point out to the magistrate that religion, which he is by force to promote." Where if by firmness and stability of persuasion and full assurance, you mean what the words import; it is plain you confess the magistrate's duty is to promote his own religion by force; for that is the religion which his firm persuasion and full assurance points out to him. If by full assurance you mean any thing but the strength of persuasion, you contradict all that you have said about firmness and stability, and degrees of persuasion; and having in that sense allowed the sufficiency of my division, where I say, "knowledge or opinion must point out that religion to him, which he is by force to promote," retract it again, and instead thereof, under the name of full assurance, you substitute and put in true religion; and so firmness of persuasion is in effect laid by, and nothing but the name made use of: for pray tell me, is firmness of persuasion, or being of the true religion, either of them by itself sufficient to point out to the magistrate that religion which it is his duty to promote by force? For they do not always go together. If being of the true religion by itself may do it, your mentioning firmness of persuasion, grounded on solid proof that leaves no doubt, is to no purpose, but to mislead your reason; for every one that is of the true religion does not arrive at that high degree of persuasion that full assurance which approaches that which is very near to that which is produced by demonstration. And in this sense of full assurance, which you say men may have of the true religion, and can never have of a false one, your answer amounts to this; that full assurance, in him that embraces the true religion, will point out the religion he is by force

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to promote: where it is plain, that by fulness of assurance you do mean not the firmness of his persuasion that points out to him the religion which he is by force to promote, (for any lower degree of persuasion to him that embraces the true religion would do it as certainly, and to one that embraces not the true religion, the highest degree of persuasion would even in your opinion do nothing at all) but his being of the true religion, is that which alone guides him to his duty of promoting the true religion by force. So that to my question, how shall a magistrate, who is persuaded that it is his and every magistrate's duty to promote the true religion by force, be determined in his use of force; you seem to say his firm persuasion or full assurance of the truth of the religion he so promotes must determine him; and presently, in other words, you seem to lay the stress upon his actually being of the true religion. The first of these answers is not true; for I have shown, that firmness of persuasion may and does point out to magistrates false religions as well as the true: and the second is much what the same, as if to one, who should ask what should enable a man to find the right way who knows it not, it should be answered, the being in it. One of these must be your meaning, choose which you please of them; if you have any meaning at all in your sixth, and beginning of the seventh page, to which I refer the reader; where, if he find nothing else, he cannot fail to find a specimen of school-play, of talking uncertainly in the utmost perfection, nicely and artificially worded, that it may serve for a specimen of a masterpiece in that kind; but a specimen of the answerableness of my Letter will require, as I imagine, a little more plain dealing. And to satisfy readers, that have not attained to the admiration of skilfully saying nothing, you must directly inform them, whether firmness of persuasion be or be not sufficient in a magistrate to enable him to do his duty in promoting the true religion by force; or else this you have pitched on will scarce be a sample of the answerableness of all I have said.

But you stand positive in it, and that is like a master,

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that it cannot be inferred from the magistrate's being obliged to promote by force the true religion, that every magistrate is obliged to promote by force his own religion; and that for the same reason you had given before, more perplexed and obscurely, viz. "Because there is this perpetual advantage on the side of the true religion, that it may and ought to be believed on clear and solid grounds, such as will appear the more so, the more they are examined: whereas no other religion can be believed so, but upon such appearances only as will not bear a just examination."

This would be an answer to what I have said, if it were so that all magistrates saw the preponderancy of the grounds of belief, which are on the side of the true religion; but since it is not the grounds and reasons of a truth that are not seen, that do or can set the magistrate upon doing his duty in the case,—but it is the persuasion of the mind, produced by such reasons and grounds as do affect it, that alone does, or is capable to determine the magistrate in the use of force, for performing of his duty,—it necessarily follows, that if two magistrates have equally strong persuasions concerning the truth of their religions respectively, they must both be set on work thereby, or neither; for though one be of a false, and the other of the true religion, yet the principle of operation, that alone which they have to determine them, being equal in both, they must both be determined by it; unless it can be said, that one of them must act according to that principle, which alone can determine, and the other must act against it; that is, do what he cannot do,—be determined to one thing, by what at the same time determines him to another. From which incapacity in magistrates to perform their duty by force to promote the true religion, I think it may justly be concluded, that to use force for the promoting any religion cannot be their duty.

You tell us, it is by the law of nature magistrates are obliged to promote the true religion by force. It must be owned, that if this be an obligation of the law of nature, very few magistrates overlook it; so forward

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are they to promote that religion by force which they take to be true. This being the case, I beseech you tell me what was Huaina Capac, emperor of Peru, obliged to do? who, being persuaded of his duty to promote the true religion, was not yet within distance of knowing or so much as hearing of the Christian religion, which really is the true (so far was he from a possibility to have his belief grounded upon the solid and clear proofs of the true religion.) Was he to promote the true religion by force? That he neither did nor could know any thing of; so that was morally impossible for him to do. Was he to sit still in the neglect of his duty incumbent on him? That is in effect to suppose it a duty and no duty at the same time. If, upon his not knowing which is the true religion, you allow it not his duty to promote it by force, the question is at an end: you and I are agreed, that it is not the magistrate's duty by force to promote the true religion. If you hold it in that case to be his duty; what remains for him to do, but to use force to promote that religion which he himself is strongly, nay, perhaps to the highest degree of firmness, persuaded is the true? Which is the granting what I contend for, that, if the magistrate be obliged to promote by force the true religion, it will thence follow, that he is obliged to promote by force that religion which he is persuaded is the true; since, as you will have it, force was given him to that end, and it is his duty to use it; and he hath nothing else to determine it to that end but his own persuasion. So that one of these two things must follow, either that in that case it ceases to be his duty, or else he must promote his own religion; choose you which you please * * * * * * *

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END OF VOL. VI.

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I Toleration because
1. causes no hard as does
outward immoralities

II But not to those having foreign alegiances.
to those intolerant
who deny the being of god

III Toleration allows fully for the
right of excommunication

Note He is no heretic who accepts the
scripture at all contained [illegible] in its
exact words.

a' 2nd letter

ridicules idea that force is
necessary to make men consider the
gospel and shows positive exit effects
of force.

a third letter for --
We cannot know but only believe
our religious true for all knowledge is
innate
or demonstrated
+ hence since he cant know the magistrate
should not punish others for not believing

Cf. Chapter Heading [illegible] 3rd letter

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4th Setter

Personal charges at 1st.

still debating – should every magistrate force others to accept what he believes on good & sufficient ground

(to himself, as Sarke points out)

distinguishes carefully between Knowledge & belief or opinion!

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